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THE
WILD IRISH BOY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF MONTORIO.

Charles Robert Matutin

"But if that country of Ireland from which you lately came, be of so goodly and commodious a soil, as you report, I wonder that no course is taken for the turning thereof to good uses, and reducing that nation to better government and civility."

Spenser's View of the State of Ireland.

VOL. I.

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PATERNOSTER-ROW,

By J. D Dewick, Aldersgate-Street.

1808.

TO
THE RIGHT HONORABLE
THE
EARL OF MOIRA,
&c. &c. &c.

My LORD,

As I have not the honor of being known to your Lordship in the slightest degree, I can hardly be suspected of an intention to flatter you, or magnify myself by dedicating this work to you. My reason for doing it is briefly this, your Lordship has frequently and zealously avowed yourself the friend of Irishmen and Irish talent.

Whether I possess talent or not, I cannot pronounce ; but as I have brought my claims before the public, it is natural that I should be anxious to have the question decided ; now by dedicating this book to you, the question must be decided, for if it possess talent, it will (of course) secure your Lordship's notice. Of the work or of myself I have little to say. I have already written a work with the title of " Montorio," which your Lordship may possibly read, if you are pleased with this ; in my opinion, you will be better employed if you do. I myself prefer it for more reasons than that it gave fourfold the trouble of " The Wild Irish Boy."

I am an Irishman, unnoticed and unknown, a professional man without

preferment, and an author without celebrity. No man covets obscurity, yet I would not willingly emerge from mine, till I am called forth, and feel that I deserve to be called forth, that society owes me something, and is solicitous to repay me, that I have a place and a name on earth. “ *Ex fumo dare lucem,*” I think an excellent motto for a man not indignant of concealment, but not formed for concealment.

I have the honor to be,

&c. &c. &c.

THE AUTHOR OF MONTORIO.

P R E F A C E.

MOST authors have a vast deal to say of their writings, this is not the case with me. I have but a few observations to make, and then to "reading with what appetite you may." My first work was said to be too defective in female characters and female interest. I have tried to remedy both defects, I have introduced a sufficient number of females; and if they are not interesting, I cannot help them. Yet let me premise that of love, I have never in my life read (what I conceived to be) an adequate representation; it is therefore natural that I should despair of making one. Its folly, and fantasy, and fastidiousness, its high, remote, incommunicable modes of feeling and expres-

sion, its nice and subtle pleasures, its luxurious melancholy, its happiness that mocks mortality, and its despair that defies religion, seldom can, seldom ought, to be represented.

This novel from its title purports to give some account of a country little known. I lament I have not had time to say more of it ; my heart was full of it, but I was compelled by the laws of this mode of composition to consult the pleasure of my readers, not my own. The fashionable materials for novel-writing I know to be, a lounge in Bond-street, a phaeton-tour in the Park, a masquerade with appropriate scenery, and a birth-day or birth-night, with dresses and decorations, accurately copied from the newspapers.

He who writes with an hope of being read, must write something like this. I say must, because this species of writing, not exacting a sacrifice of principles, but of

taste, the public have reasonably a right to dictate in. He who would prostitute his morals, is a monster, he who sacrifices his inclination and habits of writing, is—an author.

At the same time, it is desirable to look forward to the time, when independence, acquired without any sacrifice of integrity, will enable a man to consult only himself in the choice and mode of his subject. He who is capable of writing a good novel, ought to feel that he was born for a higher purpose than writing novels.

THE WILD IRISH BOY.

To Miss E. St. Clair.

Dominick Street, Dublin.

MY DEAR CHILD.

WHEN an old maiden aunt puts on her spectacles, and takes up her pen, it is said there is no getting her to lay them down. I should be sorry to lay them down without having employed them to some purpose ; for the effort has been sufficiently painful to me. I really do begin to feel the lassitude of old age and seclusion stealing over every part of me, except my affections. These, my dear, are, I think, as strong towards you especially as they have ever been, from the moment that my first tears fell on your orphan face. You were the child of pa-

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rents very dear to me—you are very dear to me yourself—too dear perhaps. My affections should begin to loosen in their hold and interest in earthly things. But of all earthly things, you and your present situation are the most interesting. You have just approached the entrance into life—or, what is called life, that is, a sudden immersion into its worst parts. A few years passed in a convent in France, followed by a few more in a retired part of the country with your uncle and me, (a clergyman and his sister) and those altogether so few, (you are only sixteen) have formed a contrast rather than a preparation to the life you are entering on—the gaieties of a city in its gay season.

My dear, do not construe this into a childish solicitude about inferior objects; I am not going to give you a lecture about early hours and flannel petticoats.

Oh! my dear child, my hopes and fears about you have never been satisfied

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with the objects of this life: Could I be so, I should have little to dread. When I look at you, I see youth, feeling, genius, and—no, not beauty—but something ten thousand times better than beauty in the eyes of men—and women too. But then there is a balance—a fatal balance to all this—a modern designer would make it the brightest tint in the piece—in my eyes it is the only shade.

You have a terrible portion of what is called, I believe, sensibility, by people whose business is to teach us to “commit the oldest sins the newest kind of ways”—different writers will give different definitions of this quality.

An old maiden aunt I fear would call it—an habitual misapplication of the good and evil of life---a rejection of the good, till the good has *departed*---and a contempt of the evil, till the evil has *arrived*. I am not speaking of this quality exercised on the trivial parts of life---

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on such its exercise is teasing but harmless ; a sentimental miss may be allowed to lavish away her agonies on dead butterflies and dying canaries, and perhaps it is well for others as well as herself that she does so. But the quality I refer to, is rarely content with such sacrifices. It *will* extend its influence to the most important parts of life, it will determine us in our choice of happiness---or of misery.

I know the progress of this business---I can tell (I trust not *foretell* to you) every stage of it--it begins by adopting a certain mode of reasoning and feeling of its own, which, by some intuitive sense of right, it discovers to be the most exquisite and felicitous that can be devised ; it then proceeds to apply this high strain of thinking and acting, to the ordinary events of life. The history of its internal feelings furnishes it with the narrative of romance, nor will the narrative be long without an hero. Life now as

sumes the unalterable complexion of confirmed error—creation has but one bright spot, one spot like the garden of Eden; all the rest is a waste wilderness. Human nature presents but *one object* to the view, all the rest of mankind glide like shadows before the mental and bodily eye. But from this golden age, there is an instant transition to the iron.

This state of things cannot continue long—characters and feelings, unnaturally stretched on this sentimental bed of torture, must return with violence to their natural tone and dimensions. The hero or heroine, the idol of romantic passion, is discovered in some unlucky moment of common sense or common life, to be the last thing their worshipper would wish the idol to be found—an human being; to have passions and infirmities, and wants utterly unprovided for by the statutes of romance. Perhaps, what is still more afflicting, the person,

who has indulged this fatal state of feeling, discovers a certain defection in his own powers of living beyond human life, a certain sensibility of common evils, and a subjection to common accidents, to ill-health and misfortune, and indigence, that "sickles o'er" the rich colourings of passion, with the pale cast of humanity.

The consequences are dreadful; a total and hopeless dejection overshadows the mind: it is not as in other cases, where a discovery of deception is a security against future evil: no, all discovery is too late, it cannot renew a broken frame of mind, as it cannot repair the ruined fabric of life and happiness, over whose fragments it is yet more delightful to the sufferer to linger and wail, than to erect an humbler and safer structure of materials, such as common life supplies, and such as afford comfort and shelter to

those who expect no more from any
"earthly habitation."

Comfort is yet perhaps in their power,
but comfort they have always despised,
and those that sought it, and their con-
tempt is now aggravated by that natural
pride of disappointment, that scorns to
divide or palliate evil. Rapture or de-
spair was their choice of life, and their
choice seldom leaves them more than the
latter alternative. The rest of life is
wasted in fretful repinings, or solitary
gloom, in unpitied complaints of evils
of which they will not see the cause,
in a black and splenetic deprecation of
life in which they will see no good, be-
cause it did not afford them that good
which it cannot afford to man.

But example is said to be more pow-
erful than precept: I will give you an
example the most in my memory and con-
viction—I mean my own. At an age when
I had at least the beauty of youth (fifty

years ago) I received my first proposal ; it was from a gentleman who wooed me like a man and a Christian. He talked of life as having many toils and trials, he said he wished to have a companion in the one, and a support under the other ; that his temper had many infirmities, nor did he believe mine to be without them, all human tempers had them ; that he expected no supernatural heart and character from the influence of passion, no transformation of life into a " primrose path of dalliance " by the magic of fantasy. But, he said, he expected a gradual and benignant amelioration of life, from mutual instances of sacrificed selfishness ; from the progress of confidence, from the memory of kindness, and the habits of affection ; above all, from the influence of religion, which he described as having power like the prophet's wand to heal the waters of bitterness with which life overflows. I acknowledge I

heard him with disgust—perhaps, because my sense of hearing and all my other senses had been perverted by a young man, who had at least enough to please the eye and the ear, that loved to listen to romance—I cannot exactly remember the style in which it was usual for men to talk to women sixty years ago, but I know it was not in that cold anatomical way of love-making which seems the fashion of this philosophic age. My favoured lover had no fortune, but he spoke so eloquently of the stimulus, and the support that passion gives to industry, of the cheerfulness of his toils, of the delight of success, or the consolation of disappointment, that I hardly thought I had any merit in sacrificing the promise of life to the invitations of a passion so pure and lofty ; so much what I had taught myself to expect, and had been told I could inspire.

He went to London (for I then lived

in England) to engage in business, to which he had strong recommendations, and I remained in the country, content for his sake with celibacy and loneliness, with suspended expectations, and visions of happiness. I acquit him of any intention to impose on me, but he had been too successful in imposing on himself. His prospects were open and promising, but he neglected and dismissed them ; it was so delightful to have a hoard of sentimental misery, to talk of the pangs of separation, and the lingerings of happiness, that he could not persuade himself to adopt any effort to extricate himself from a situation of such genuine and approved distress. He talked of the toil he would undergo, with his arms folded, and his papers and desk buried in dust ; he talked of the happiness to which he was aspiring, but confined his aspiration to wishes, and sighs, and letters. In the mean time he was not without other

objects of regard ; many women loved to listen to the language he had spoken to me, and he loved to speak it to every woman. He forgot one who was withering away in solitude for his sake, without a reproach, and without a distrust of him. This state of things could not long continue—in the sweet lapse of sentiment (his favourite phrase) he was impelled to the arms of the wife of the man who had been his friend and benefactor, in whose house he lived, and whose affection and confidence, and bread, he shared. His detection was easy ; his character and fortunes were now destroyed ; he fled to France, the guilty wife followed him ; they struggled through many years of indigence and squalid wretchedness, and died in beggary.

For some years I wished myself—where they were before me—I had little tie to life—my health was destroyed, my spirits crushed : I was in the

wane of life, without the possibility from external as well as internal causes, to form another connection, to lay hold on another stay for my deceived and tottering steps. I had but one motive to live, it was to atone to the author of life, for the criminal abuse of its best part, for the preversion of gifts, which, had I learnt the uses of them from religion, would have engaged his approbation, and secured my own felicity. The power that taught me this, taught me also the value of what remained. About this time your uncle, who was my favourite brother, was promoted to a deanry in Ireland, and invited me to that country with him. I did not despise the happiness that was yet within my reach ; I sought it in tranquillity and retirement, in the scrutiny of my conscience, and the purification of my heart. In these I have found a peace which the world cannot give.

* * * * *

I was compelled to break off—my feelings *have* been elevated, but not above humanity; yet you are perhaps at this part of my letter, demanding why I harass your feelings and my own, by an exhibition of distress which you neither fear nor deserve; you are asking what reason can there be for apprehensions which nothing relating to you has yet suggested. Ah! my dear, every thing relating to you suggests an apprehension to me—your frame and habits of mind, your studies, your early solitude, and sudden transition to a scene of glare and gaiety, your being of the Romish religion (a religion which I fear allows too much of the language of passion to its professors)—but we are never to look to the prominent features of life for the causes of the events that occur in it. We are all weak local creatures, perpetually excited by trifles, and pursuing names of things, not things themselves. I con-

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fess I dread more than all I have mentioned your orphan state, and the mystery that hangs over your birth, a mystery so congenial to a romantic mind, which loves to believe that life, from its commencement, has been marked with select and uncommon features in their behalf. I ever dread the romantic name your mother gave you, which though I suppose common in France, no one in this country can hear without believing herself more than half the heroine of a tale. I am full of this subject, but I will try rather to say what ought to be said, than can be said.

Whatever tempts you to act in the greater emergencies of life, from impulse rather than deliberation, must be wrong. I must here insert a passage from your uncle's last sermon. He was speaking of the modern philosophy—"The distribution it makes of the different powers of the mind, appears eminently injudicious—it inverts the

places both of feeling and reason—reason appears assigned to man to be exercised at leisure, to assist him in a deliberate comparison of things, and enable him to determine his preference or rejection of them. While feeling appears allowed him, to interfere in those cases where to consult reason is impossible from haste or from emotion, and suggest, with a promptitude and energy which the occasion demands, that conclusion which a balance of opposite probabilities would suggest, were there time for such a balance. Life abounds with such cases ; no man has time for *debate* amid the rage of a volcano, or the horror of a siege—on such an occasion, to act from the impulse of the moment, under its most sudden and arbitrary suggestions, is to act justifiably and rationally.

“But the modern philosophy, like Moliere’s physician, has ‘changed all that now.’ We are to adopt feeling as our

guide in the greater movements of life; and we are to *reason* on the most minute events, and the most abrupt emergencies.

“ In the choice of a companion for life, in the choice of a mode of subsistence, nay, in the choice of life or death itself, we are to abandon ourselves to an impulse, we are to consult a momentary feeling, which, according to their account, is also the result of the mean and mechanical causes, of the air we breathe, or the last meal we have eaten, or the last object that has given a motion to our animal spirits. While he who assists the sufferers in a burning house, is to pause and *reason* on the steps of the ladder, whether the life he preserves be of more consequence than that he neglects, whether he ought to throw back into the flames the infant he has just snatched, and inquire whether there be any possessor of an enlightened mind in the same danger, whose preser-

vation from it would contribute to the 'general good.'

Now to quit your uncle's sermon, and pursue my own. Whatever tempts you to believe that the laws of nature and society can be repealed in your case, and that the peculiar state of your feelings, &c. furnishes you with a dispensation for their infringement, is wrong. Whatever leads you to believe that the obvious and permanent duties of life may be superseded in *your case* by the intervention of some extrinsic and temporary appeal to your feelings; that to be a relative or a friend, is less important than to be the heroine of the moment, must be wrong.

Whatever leads you to believe that the desire of unattainable happiness should become the fixed passion of your life; and that its rich, fantastic misery is a balance for the sacrifice of rational enjoyment——

I will add no more, except that I be-

lieve all lessons of human wisdom are vain, all power of human conviction, weak and unproductive: When I had you with me, "I showed unto you a more excellent way."

May you never mistake or forget it. My dear child, while I but *write* these words, my eyes, which are none of the clearest, grow too dim to write any more; and my hand, which at seventy-six *may* be unsteady, is too tremulous to hold my pen.

JANE ST. CLAIR.

P. S. Don't *answer* me, my dear, I did not write to be answered—but let nothing interrupt your correspondence with your cousin Martha Gore; she is one for whom I have the greatest regard; she is the daughter of the man whose addresses my folly rejected, who afterwards married my younger sister, with whom she lived many years of rational happiness

and progressive esteem. There is about your cousin Martha, a facility, a placid and pliant spirit, that eminently qualifies her for a confidant and correspondent. I am an old woman, weak and irritable, and querulous; but she is all concession and gentleness, though her concessions never are extended to her principles, and her gentleness never debilitates her understanding.

Deanry, November 18.

N. B. Pray do not forget mine and the dean's best compliments to your guardian and his family, and inform *him*, that when you return in the summer to us, it will give us pleasure to see you accompanied by any of his family, who can bear to domesticate with a country divine, and an old maiden aunt.

To Mrs. M. G—re.

* * * * *

I HAVE received a letter from the country, full of advice, “excellent good advice.”---My poor, kind, deceived aunt! She tell me, that---she tells me what it is now too late to tell, and what, if told earlier, would have been perhaps in vain. There is nothing that wrings my heart more than the feeling of being beyond the advice and wishes of the good, of the hopes and fears of affection, all that touches or ameliorates the heart being of no avail to you; of being beyond the prayers of a friend, and obliged to listen to all that *can be said* with conviction and despair. I could not avoid answering her. In my letter I ventured on my first deliberate falsehood. I assured her I was quite tranquil and happy. It was better that I should deceive her than. . . . Besides we all mean

different things by happiness. If it be happiness to me to sit for hours alone at my window, watching nothing; if it be happiness to me to be much alone, to think, and to weep, or smile more hopelessly than I weep; if it be happiness to talk to no one, and, when none can hear, to wish for nothing more in life than solitude, for nothing more in thought than a dream; if it be happiness to me to be what the world calls wretched, but what the few who feel it would not change for the *world's* happiness, to live upon the sweet, sweet poison of *dejected* fancies: if this be happiness, I may be happy.

But how can we talk of happiness, when the sufferings of those around us can disturb and make us wretched?

There are some characters, situations I mean, that have a power of exciting solicitude even to misery, to misery such as I never could feel for myself. I

have conceived a character that I wish had never existed—a young, a very young person, almost a boy, with the form of a girl, and the feelings of a man; no, not of a man, with more modesty, more freshness, more retirement and timidity, and youthfulness of mind, than men, men in the world, *can* have. How fair, Oh! how fair, beyond the promises of humanity, are the promises of such a life; and, at its very entrance, ardent in untried sensibility, and profuse of affections that seem given in excess, to meet with the usual events and characters, the common train of temptation and vice, the weak and the worthless, and the debasing society, but which tempts the young wanderer with the Circe-cup of riot and transformation; one to whom the call to pleasure sounds like the call of friendship, who follows the invitation of vice, because he loves the friendliness of its tone; who is betrayed by the very

affections that promised him happiness, because he trusted without suspicion, and loved without defect; and such a one, so soft, so warm, so touching from contrasted virtues, and ill-suited circumstances; trusting with such helplessness, and yet feeling with such force and fire; submitting to vice, yet aspiring after virtue; unwillingly undone, and bearing the melancholy splendor of his original brightness through cloud and mist.

And he might have been so happy, and they might have had other victims. There are so many common-place heads and hearts, who would never have betrayed the struggle of grace and passion, never would have been disfigured with the wreck of worth, and the spoils of a lovely nature. Is it possible to think of such a one without *I will not see his ruin*; no, *that I am resolved on, I could not witness his utter ruin. I will hide myself in some convent, some convent*

in Dublin, where local thoughts will mingle with my prayers, and soothe my mind, for it is touched to the quick. Oh ! there is such a consolation in the offices of our religion ; it is no cold, abstract, " reasonable service." We may clasp our saint's images, and kiss their pictures, with strong human feeling. We can strain our burning eyelids and forehead to cold refreshing stone, and waste the throbbings of an heart, whose pulse is too quick, against the relic and the shrine. We can say in the moment of human agony, "*My saint will have mercy on me, she has been human like me, like me she has been tempted, she knows all that is within my heart, all that I dare not know myself, she will lean from rest to listen to me, and to intercede for me.*"

ELMAIDE ST. CLAIR.

You know all---yes, you must know all—I could not expect to escape a female correspondent. But there were expressions in my last foolish letter, that did not require a female reader to construe. But now, Martha, let it be as something you had never known, or were determined to forget, for ever. Let us speak of it as of things past and gone by, determined and desperate, not to be recalled or debated on; let us speak of it as the widow who had pined for years would speak of the subject of her sorrows, beyond grief and fondness for ever. Do not ask me why I speak in this tone of resolute misery. I have seen him, and have felt that the complexion of life is determined. But he has seen me, and has felt, as if he looked on vacancy; and it is better, much better so. I can hardly bear his sight, I could not bear his voice speaking to me; his rich and angel tones would madden me: no, I cannot woo

him. I will hide myself in the solitude of pride and despair. Perhaps when he treads on my grave, he may pause, he may ask---oh ! let him not, let him not ; shall I not rest in a grave ?--No, Martha, no, I see all, nor am I unwilling to see it. There is no hope for me, but the despair that the fancy-sick mind loves more than hope. He is not to be thought of, but in my dreams. You must have heard of him ; all Dublin rings with his extravagance, and his dissoluteness, and his beauty.

I heard, when I first came to Dublin, of the nephew and heir of the old Milesian chieftain De Lacy, who resides in a castle in the wild, western extremities of Ireland. I know not why he sent him here to blaze out life in early vice, for he is said to despise modern splendour, and modern folly ; and lest youth and extravagance might fail of excess, lest his heart might prevail over his circum-

stances, they have sent with him a companion, another nephew of the chieftain, whose commission is, I believe, to be "a guide to vice:" at least it is one that he discharges with dreadful fidelity to this unhappy boy.

He is much older, and has the bold, broad front of unredeemed depravity. I heard of the groupe when I first came. I wish I had never seen him. The first day I saw him, he was springing into his curricie, but he sprung from it again to raise a beggar who had tottered as he rushed by him.—I wish I had never seen him.

ELMAIDE ST. CLAIR.

To Mrs. M. G.

No, Martha, give me no advice, it is *too good* for me; I solemnly acquit you of any more offices of friendship to one who will be undone; who lives on

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dreams, and loves despair. If you can give me any consolation—but that is impossible. Do you observe a more strong and tenacious tone in the style of this letter? strange to say, it has been the effect of joy—yes, of joy, you must be prepared for the caprices of passion. This has been a day of such rich and remembered indulgence, that it requires the balance of reviewing my state to support it. I saw him twice, and once I was *so near him*—Martha, I will tell you all—no, not all; I cannot tell what I felt when I saw him at a distance. He so often passes me in the whirl of a phaeton, that before the mist is dispersed which his sight always clouds my eyes with, he is gone. But he was walking—and alone. I could fix my eyes on him while dim and remote, and learn to gaze though he was approaching, and just when he was too near for pleasure, when I grew sick with too much love; he turn-

ed aside to some carriage that had stopped ; some happy hand beckoned to him from the window, and he leant against it, and conversed with the owner ; then I passed him, and I did not see that exquisite fold of his limbs, and the profile his rich locks shaded so richly. He did not see me—no, and it gave me a strange joy that he did not ; for passion is fond of wayward devices, of indulgence, and pain. After that, I could not go home. There was a spell in the streets that kept my spirit wandering in their circle ; for the triflers with me, trifling excuses were sufficient ; they wondered at my spirits, and I wondered at their serenity.

But, oh ! Martha, the second time—I had not time to drag down my veil, or do any thing but stand breathless.

He was so near, that he touched me ; yes, touched me ; I shivered, and felt it—for ever. What is that thick and

thrilling sensation, that the touch only can give, that virtue which the garment can communicate? I can bear to meet his eye, were it half withdrawn, or shaded by the eye-lid; I could gaze on it for ever; but the touch must be felt but once in life—Could he have felt me tremble!—He turned, that was too much. I felt his hyacinth breath on me; I could have counted the hair that played on his cheek, it was so near. I am at home now, and alone, but how I cannot remember.

One in the Morning.

I am just returned from the theatre; indulgence makes us bold. I joined the family going there, because I thought—I will not tell you what I thought. Why is there always about a theatre, a kind of daring levity, of allowed and familiar looseness, more than about any other assembly? The men go back and forwards in

the dress of the morning, and appear employed in any thing but the employment of the place. I know not why, but I always feel myself less timid, less cold, less a female in this place than in any other. The glare, and the heat, and the noise, harden the senses, perhaps inflame them, perhaps—no matter for the philosophy of a theatre. From the moment I entered, I felt an expectation which I knew would be realized. The intelligences of love are unerring. He entered about the third act, like one who had risen from a late irksome dinner; his cheek was dark, and his eye restless. I looked at him with fondness and agony. In a few moments he quitted the opposite side of the house, and came into the very box where I was sitting. He knew some one on the row behind me, and she took care that her knowledge of him should be observed. He is a thing to make a woman vain. How could she speak so

at her ease, while I could hardly breathe from the moment I felt his presence—felt—for I dared not see him. I could neither turn nor look. I was as one watching the sleep of enchantment which a motion would break. There is no pleasure in having him so very near; it is a state too breathless, and fearful, and exquisite. But to watch for the tones which broke upon the idle noise about me from time to time, like the song of the water-spirit amid the bubble of the brook; to watch for those indistinct sounds from which I tried to guess his motions, and think whether we leant against the same partition—this, and a thousand devices of joy and pain I practised, till the lady talked, as women will talk, something of love. His voice changed in a moment, his words were few and broken, and hardly articulate, and I dared not look at him then; but though I did not see, I knew that his eyes were depressed, and his head bowed.

It was a strange moment ; I know not whether it was joy or misery to me to feel that—perhaps he loved.

It was but a moment. That odious Deloraine came into the box, and spoke to him in a certain tone, which he seemed to catch directly—yet still I tried to think reluctantly. I tried to think its loudness and laugh were forced. Deloraine drew him into another box among a number of young men ; and I was happier, for then unseen I could see sometimes the motion of his arm as he leant against the pillar ; once I beheld the undulation of his rich red lip, as he spoke to some one ; some one who heard him, perhaps, as he would have listened to the wind.

They never loved who wished to be near what they loved. Werter talks of dancing with Charlotte, of holding her in his arms ; what feelings men have ! Such a time is with me, a time of fear and blindness. I love to be so far from

him, that it is requisite for me to watch and devise how I may catch a glance or a tone from him. I would not be nearer if I might; a glance, a tone is enough, is too much for me. "A touch is," as Alonzo says, "to be bought with life." Why will he speak in those soft tones, and yet speak nothing but lightness? why will he mingle with those beings, and be still so unlike them? I wish he would be either angel or human, and I might then have peace. But this mixture of loveliness and depravity, this beauty and brightness of a fallen angel, so rends my feelings, so confounds my mind—what principles I have left, are so shaken and shattered, that I wish I were dead, to be shut out from pain.

Odious Deloraine would not let him rest long; he whispered him again, and they left the box together, yet I thought he went unwillingly, I thought I heard him sigh. He went; and I could not rush and

recall him, I could not speak, I could not interpose even a look—a look might have done it; he is so young, so timid in vice, of so sweet and auspicious a nature—surely the saints will pardon him. Twice they told me it was all over, it had been all over with me before. As we went out, he was lounging near the lobby fire, in an attitude of studied boldness; I am sure it was studied. It was a form to make libertinism lovely, therefore I tried to hurry away from him; but to be from him is impossible. I am now alone, with the images of the night before my eyes, and the restlessness of dissipation in my head. If he loves—but why do I rave? He ought to love, love purifies the heart it is said; but what purifies the heart of man, may break that of woman.

ELMAIDE ST. CLAIR.

To Mrs. G—re.

DEAR Martha, no more such letters; you need write no more to me, but I must write to you. I only ask from you silence and secrecy, I do not ask compassion, I feel I do not deserve it. But I must write to you; if I am denied this means of soothing my mind, I feel it will be more than I can bear; do not drive me to extremities.

The indulgencies I allow myself cannot be criminal, they cannot be dangerous; they are so visionary, so infrequent, so interrupted by restraint and suffering! Besides, it is all I can ever know of indulgence, and misery is jealous of its respite. Would you rob an hermit of the picture he bows to in his cold cell? It cannot be a crime to gaze on so fair a sight, and distantly and rarely as I gaze on him: there are colours and forms in nature

so lovely, that they seem made for love. If it be no crime to look on the red rose-leaf, on the amber foliage of autumn so lovely and luxuriant ; it can be no crime to look on his cheek so like the red rose-leaf, or his hair so like the lovely foliage of autumn ; nay even to think of them as I do, when I wish myself a breeze to breathe on them and die.

This is all, and is this so much ? and the balance for misery so keen and ceaseless ? Think that I have a task to do, a pilgrimage to go, so long, and sad, and sombrous, a life of hopeless love ; and to live out a long, long waste of years, which may be protracted from time to time by the sight of him, (a cordial of cruel sweetness !) and never to have a gleam of hope from his eye, or a sound from his lip, no more than if I wooed a star from Heaven ! and when I die of a broken heart, to know that he may walk over my grave, and never know that the

heart which moulders there was broken for his love, that the hovering spirit would be absolved by his sigh—all this must be, and it is my pride that all this must be ; for worlds I would not that he knew I loved. If I were unworthy of him, I could have no consolation ; if I were so lost, I could not pray for his soul.

* * * * *

If I am guilty, my punishment will not be long deferred.. They say he is a gamester now, that he is engaged in a desperate bet with some of the most desperate of the set at D—ly's, about racing or gaming ; I could not hear the particulars. This must be odious Deloraine's doing.

ELMAIDE ST. CLAIR.

Martha, I do kneel and pray ; I do struggle with my heart, and weep that the struggle is so vain. There is an

hollowness and duplicity in my feelings which distract me to discover. But of what avail would the firmest resolution be to me? the power that enslaves me is not within me; I cannot make it cease, if I wished. But to feel all my good resolutions and wishes, the whole pile of determined amendment, that the tears and prayers of a penitential night seem to have raised, the calm of mind that is sometimes produced by weariness of woe, to feel all this overthrown and scattered by a single glimpse of his form, by the very dream of his shadow when I close my eyes, and see darkness filled with flitting forms, to think that the very depths of my heart are unable to shelter me from his eye, even if I sought shelter, to feel in the very moment and spirit of supplication, while my lips are pouring out the most solemn sounds—I am “confessed within the slave of love and man”—to feel this, is to feel myself so

lost, so hopeless, that despair almost becomes a refuge, that I am glad to sink under the waters, to lose the noise of their roar.

It is a dreadful state of mind, when real objects become visionary, and visionary ones, realities.

All life appears to me a dream—I move like a shadow among those whom I see, and they are as shadows to me. But his presence seems always real; his thought seems the purpose of life. But it is to no purpose that I think of him.

Why do they talk to me of his dissolute courses—he is more innocent than any that speak of him. He cannot be what they say of him, or if he be, he cannot err as others would err; the heart and the motive are what they cannot penetrate, or they would know that his have nothing to do with the vices forced on him: yet let them talk of him still, for they mention his name to me, and that

name tells them of nothing more than any other sound they utter ; it does not remind them of a cheek whose colour is like the stain of ripe fruit on marble, of an eye from which when he shakes his clustering ringlets, I am sick with brightness, and with them veiled again. There are two lines of an old Irish song, which perhaps will make you smile, but which have made me weep from the thoughts of him.

His eye is like light in the morning's blue stream,
And his cheek is like strawberries smothered in cream.

Did I ever try to describe his person
to you.

* * * * *

I never will attempt it again.

E. ST. CLAIR.

To Mrs. G—re.

Now I know all, I know the worst, or
best ; no matter which to me. He is in

love; he loves, I knew he loved; from the moment I first beheld his melancholy eye, first heard his suppressed tones, like sweet, broken music; first saw his form, which the very spirit of love seems to have touched with a kind of luxuriant sadness, to have poured a mild and mellow light around, an halo of melancholy brightness; I knew he loved; such a being was only formed for love.

He is undone, his ruin could not be more certainly sealed than by such a passion. And so young, and so innocent; "oh the pity of it." But how was it possible for him to escape? You must have heard of Lady Montrevor, the modern Ninon, "who has filled the throne of fashion," and fashionable folly and vice, without an equal or rival, till her reign was extended over subjects of a second generation, whose beauty has triumphed over nature, and whose wit is unimpaired by time, whose sons have entered into

public life, whose daughters have married, whose grand children form a numerous family already, and whose beauty is still as distant from decline as from competition.

Always living in the blaze of courts, and in the centre of splendid admiration, her form and manners present the reflection of all that is attractive in grace, or resistless in power, all the art of beauty, and all the array of fascination. And in the midst of her triumph and her power, in the luxuriance of magnificence, and the pomp of loveliness, when her family had extended their alliances through the first houses in Great Britain, and her influence was solicited by courtiers and senators, the discovery of the legitimate heir to the title and fortunes of the earldom of Westhampton, which had been usurped by her lord for thirty years, suddenly dashed them into indigence and infamy. They retired with all that re-

mained to them, the title of Montrevor, and an impoverished income, to their estates in Ireland, where they hid, with their pride and their shame, the remains of their family and the ruin of their fortune. The circumstances that transpired on an examination of this dark business before a committee of the house of lords, were so atrocious, that Lord Montrevor is said to have owed his retirement to the influence of his lady, whose magnanimity, in sheltering and sustaining in his disgrace an husband whom in prosperity she had despised and neglected, and it is said injured, shed a gleam of dignity over the close of a life of levity and vice, a magnanimity the more gratuitous, as it appeared she was utterly ignorant of the iniquity by which her distinction had been acquired, and that Lord Westhampton, convinced of her innocence, had made her the most liberal offers by way of compensation for

the losses she sustained by the recognition of his title.

But whether she felt the decline of her attractions, or her thirst of power, or spirit of pleasure, she rejected every exclusive provision, and accompanied her husband and the children who were yet unsettled, to the wilds of Ireland, where he employs himself in dreams of recovered rank and influence, and she in deriding them; for though she follows him with tenacious fidelity, she still reserves to herself the right of ridicule and reproach, which she exercises without mercy—such is the newspaper account of this extraordinary woman.

He has seen her. The castle of De Lacy is near the seat of the Montrevor family. He saw her, and it is but necessary to see her, that all other objects may become indifferent; it is easy to tell the effect of an interview between a wild Irish boy and a veteran woman of fa-

shion, so interesting in the softness of retirement, and the dignity of solitary beauty. He is undone, yes, I repeat it, he is undone. Nothing is so fatal to the mind as the despair of early passion aggravated by the consciousness of guilt, and the constraint of disappointment. I feel it by myself. From the first moment I beheld him, I knew he loved, that his love was hopeless, and that is was guilty. His face tells it all, but oh! tells it with an expression which divests despair of gloom; and guilt of criminality. He is undone, but who can wonder at him, or at her, fevered with dissipation, and wearied with the insipid forms of fashion, what he must have appeared to her, so fresh a form, so young a mind, a single star of young morning brightness in the dark waste that surrounds her now. They say she is still beautiful as ever. She must be resistless; and alone, all around her so rude and savage, and solitary, a Ca-

lypso on a desert shore—she must be resistless! and to see her in the melancholy of departed grandeur, and the majesty of voluntary retirement, her misfortunes, and her seclusion veiling the glare of her manners, and softening the loud tones of her wit and vanity, to the docile and piano of conference, to a whispered spell of languishment and seduction, a shadowy splendour like moonlight hanging over the rich and faded colours of her beauty—yes, yes, I can imagine it all, she must be resistless. Cruel woman! in the sport of her vanity, in the spleen of her solitude, she will trifle with what a fonder heart is breaking for; she will treat him as a boy, he will love her like a man. When he finds he is abused, in the conflict of pride and love, he will rush into dissoluteness, or sink into dejection. His heart will be depraved or broken, his noble gentle heart—but mine will be

cold first. Cruel woman! she might have been content with the wreaths of conquest she had gathered in all the courts of Europe, without coming to the wilds of Ireland, to tear my wild-briar-rose from me—from me, now wild. I am not fit to be the handmaid of her he loves. I am no high-born beauty, splendid and fascinating, with melody in my voice, and magic in my smile; but if my cheek is pale, I would he knew it is for love of him—again myself; it is a wild and wayward thought, like a thought of love; yet I cannot but sometimes dream, that I would not have been so far from hope, if he had never seen that splendid lady.

E. ST. CLAIR.

His habits are desperate; it is the despair of love, vice is not natural to him. He is much talked of, they distract me by their condemnation and pity of him.

He was not framed for their pity. But they soothe me by unmingled execrations of Deloraine; all agree, that when his influence is suspended, when his mind regains its natural direction, its habits are so gentle, so domestic, even to melancholy and solitariness, he will abandon his present courses. Then they talk of his talents, of the blasted promise of a better life, of their pity and regret, &c. &c.

Then when I have heard all I can hear without betraying myself, when my eyes grow dim and my voice fails, I hasten to my room and pour out my heart in sorrow and love, in luxurious anguish and agonies of prayer. Yes, he is depraved, and to love depravity, is to love too well. Why is vice suffered to look so lovely? why is there no mask on its brow, that all may fear and shun it? I must not think of his ivory brow, yet how often has it been flushed with riot, or pale with thought, no breast near to

receive the throbbings, and
She will never love as I have loved him.
I am weak and humble with suffering,
she is high and haughty with adulation;
she thinks of the triumph of her beauty,
I think only of him—come to me, come
to me then shadowy and silent as you
come in dreams to me, that I may feel no
guilt, and think it all a vision—come to
me, my love, weary and fevered with
the strife of life; and if a broken heart
can make music, we will have songs,
and if there be rest in death, we will
slumber together.

* * * * *

Martha, my mind is hurt I fear—I
went to the window to cool my burning
forehead; he was walking below; it was
evening, and the street was lonely; his
step was slow and irregular—what was
he thinking of? possibly of some new
device of extravagance, or some means
of supplying it--it is impossible; no, if

I could coin my blood into drachmas for him, it would be in vain. A mistress, two or three mistresses I believe, perpetual engagements, and perpetual losses on the turf and the hazard table; an establishment equal to that of a young nobleman, but frequented by no noblemen, by none but those to whom his vices are a sport or a subsistence. Yet still his depravity is not the vice of the heart, it is hardly the vice of man, it is the lapse of a spirit, whose plumage is rent and ruffled by the rude airs of earth. Ah! no, no---this is all language---dare I say it, I would say it, I love him better for his dejection and his excesses. Whatever makes him human, makes him dear. The contrast between his weakness, his wildness, his dissoluteness, and his youth, and his form, and his softness when he speaks to women; the contrast between the blaze of his riot, and the gloom of his dejection; yet still pre-

serving his sensibility amid dissipation, and his gentleness in sorrow—it is too much for me.

This cannot continue long; his health has yielded at last to his excesses, or his sensibility. He is ill, and confined to the care of Deloraine; never did the worm riot on so rich a rose. There is much interest felt for him, and inquiry made even by strangers for him. I have more certain information, I could hardly have borne this term but for it. The wife of his valet is among our servants; she talks of him constantly, and I listen to her, pale and silent.

Her husband, who adores his master, attends him day and night. He is sometimes delirious; when he is calm, he bids them conceal his indisposition from his uncle, whose name he often repeats with some epithet of affection. Yesterday he started from his sleep, to desire that his old pensioners should not suffer from his

It was the first time he had ever mentioned them; weak as he was, he gave his servant the most minute directions for finding and relieving them. His vices were better known than his virtues. . . . Last night his servant thought he slept uneasily; he approached him, he was grasping something that was hung about his neck by a black ribbon, and apparently struggling to hold it. In a moment after, he started, and asked his servant whether he had seen the object he held in his hand. The man said, "he had not." He then spoke particularly to himself for a few moments, then turned to his servant, and said, "Edward, if I should die, this ribbon——" The man burst into tears, and hurried away.

And I do not weep, I have not shed a tear since his illness, I cannot. There is a despair of thought; and if he should die, there is a relief in despair, such as

those who have loved to death like me can only know, because they dare.

Something dreadful has happened ; I can make no comment on it, you cannot expect it from me. The wife of his servant has been weeping beside me all night ; all night I have kept her beside me to—weep, for she can hardly speak. Oh ! Martha, this is a moment when I would not see for worlds you or any one that knows, that thinks of me. I am wild, you would not know me. Constraint, and passion, and grief, and fear, are too much for me ; there is no woman's heart, no human heart can bear the assaults I have borne so long. He is gone, gone in the agony of feeling ; and I cannot cast myself in his way, and I cannot die under his steps, no, for that would be happiness.

His servant, the faithful servant, had left him for a few moments. During this time he observed some confusion in

the hotel where his master lodges; he was accustomed, I believe, to the clamour of creditors; but wearied and distressed, he did not perceive that Mr. Deloraine's servant had got admittance into his room with a packet of letters from the country. He soon heard the consequences. A burst of rage, and grief, and execration, brought him to his master's room. He had sprung from bed. He was dressing himself without assistance. The man approached, and attempted to inquire. He would listen to nothing; he would utter nothing. "My uncle, Oh! my poor uncle," burst from him involuntarily every moment.

He rung the bell with violence, the waiters rushed into the room, he ordered his curricule, a carriage, his horses, any thing, every thing, a wind to waft him to the west; it was night, the weather was dreary.

He staggered from debility while he

spoke. His servant, in the impulse of the moment, threw himself at his feet. He adjured him to pause, to reflect, if he was indeed wild enough to dream of travelling at that hour, and in that state. He promised himself, with the ardent fidelity of an Irishman, to travel on foot to the Chieftain's castle in the west, to procure him ease or health, if either required it. He reminded him of his long services, and implored to be his friend. Breaking from him, he fiercely cursed all friends for traitors, and all servants for plunderers. No force could hold him. The attendants retreated from his fury.

As he rushed from the room, he staggered from feebleness. His servant, who had still followed him, scarce saved him from falling; (he was but just raised from the bed of fever and delirium.) He turned his darkened and swimming eyes on the faithful man. "If

"I should die in the journey," said he, "beg of my uncle not to curse my memory, and to forgive Deloraine." And he could meet that dying look, and he could listen to those sounds of softness and agony, and not run wild as I do now. Oh! that I could run barefoot beside his wheels, till I could run no longer; to die, near him, with him, for him. He must perish, rushing upon a journey such weather, in such a state, and no arm to fold, no breast to pillow him. The earth and the elements will not feel like me—if they did—would I could be the dust beneath his feet, "this is not the despair of woman;" do not say so, one that has loved as I have done, must despair as I do. He is gone, no one knows why, or whither * * * *

* * * *

Of these letters there was no continuation for some months.

They speak of times and circumstances

of which I could not speak in the first person. I must now assume it, to make the narrative distinct. On my arrival in the country, the journey undertaken, in the rage of a fever, and among the snows of winter, had its natural effect.

I was suspended between life and death for months; and the lingerings of a nervous fever pursued me through the summer. After "suffering many things of many physicians," I had yet resolution enough to tear me from the spot, which fed my disease. I returned to Dublin, hid myself in a cottage on the sea-shore, breathed its keen air, and plunged into its waves every day; and struggled as manfully for life, as if life for me had any worth. A few letters, which I wrote to Deloraine about this time, will describe my situation more particularly. They are merely the letters of a boy of eighteen, the victim of involuntary vice, and too voluntary sen-

sibility. They are the language of a broken constitution and a world-weary spirit, mixed with remorse and concealed love.

To J. E. Deloraine, Esq.

Black Rock, October 3.

I THANK you—I believe I am somewhat better, at least, I am in the habit of saying so, to those who inquire about me, without caring how their inquiries are answered; and you may say so to any one who asks for me with the same feeling, or absence of feeling; but between ourselves, I believe, dear J. I am very near being what I wish to be. Do not be angry with me for dismissing Dr. P. I neither suspect his capacity nor attention; I would not even breathe a trivial professional jest about him; this is no time for me to speak lightly of any man's character; I acquit him and his

brethren. I firmly believe all has been done for me that they could do ; but the complaint of their impotency in certain cases, is as old as the time of Macbeth, or as much older as the operation of the passions of man on his frame. I believe I have read one exception to this general imbecility of art ; did not a physician discover the passion of Antiochus for Stratonice ? Were such a man now in the world, I would fly to its extremities from him. I attend to Dr. P.'s directions, and plunge into the sea every morning with as much tenacity, as if—— But I am afraid if I neglected it, they would say I neglected my health. This place is quite deserted, and I am, thank Heaven, quite alone in it.

It has a strange sound, but if any thing can be of service, it will be this deep loneliness, this remission of all importunity and noise, these walks, by the rough dashing of the waters, under a

grey, autumnal sky. I could not walk in broad day-light, I would not walk where there were numbers, especially numbers of such as frequent a watering place. At present I walk almost incessantly; I cannot bear riding, one cannot stoop, or pause, or loiter; and one is confined to the high road, and all its host; ~~and~~ there is a kind of jolting thoughtlessness about it, I cannot, away with.—I love the windings of the shore, with the grey clouds sweeping over the cliffs, and the waves beating at my feet. I love even the shriek of the sea-gull, and the dipping of the oars at a distance; one cannot go ten steps without meeting one of the little fishing-boats, doubling the crags and juttings of the rocks; but I pass them hastily, and they hardly see me. When the tide is out, I wander along the strand; any one that saw me would believe me to be a fossilist, or marine botanist, if they ob-

served with what intentness I unfold the clusters of sea-weed, and pick up the shells I meet. They are all for my landlord's children—children, I am not impatient of, except those whom I see peeping at me from the cliffs, while I walk on the strands below. I cannot wonder at them, my figure must be singular to them; my incessant wanderings, my solitariness, the strange contrast of early youth and melancholy, deep and substantial melancholy, I cannot wonder at them. But lest they should wonder too much at me, I often walk miles into the country, to Bray, &c. I have even walked into the county Wicklow.

There are rocks and solitudes without interruption. The people with whom I live, tell me, I must be very courageous to venture into places so wild, and disturbed so lately; and I smile with the feelings of a man who is praised for a virtue the furthest from his thoughts or

practice. I am sometimes dreadfully tired; but still it prevents me from thinking always, and it procures me that deep sleep which medicine has not been able to procure for me since my fever. I thank you for your recollection about my books. There are few books I can read now; but send me a Werter, and send me my Elzevir Virgil, I want to read over the fourth book, and some part of the sixth; that fourth book is a wonderful production, the ancients knew so little of what we call passion. Apropos, don't you think an History of Suicides would be a striking thing? I am told there is some such thing compiling now; but it is by a barrister. I will never read it; written by him I mean. He will make it a cause in the court of Common Pleas. He will tell us of the lawfulness, or unlawfulness; the expediency, or in expediency; the stupid, legal *pour et contre* of an action, of

which the human heart is bursting to know whether it may be forgiven.

Ever yours,

ORMSBY BETHEL.

P. S. If you write to the Castle, don't mention any of the melancholy nonsense of my letters to my poor uncle, I have cost him enough ; tell him I am better, and mean to be better still. I would write to him myself, but I fear he would discover the weakness of my hand. Perhaps I shall be very well before we meet again.

To J. E. Deloraine.

Black Rock, October 6.

* * * * *

No, no, my dear D. no more letters intended to raise my spirits ; I do not enjoy, I cannot read them, I cannot be broke in upon by laughter ; it is to me

"very tragical mirth truly." Write to me plainly, earnestly, soothingly, as we write to those whom we believe to be not far from death.

I did not intend to say so much ; but I believe I have said no more than the truth. Do not menace me with a visit from Sandys, Morris, Hoare, and the rest, I could not bear them, or they probably me ; I have had too much of Sandys, Morris, Hoare, and the rest. You and they have almost destroyed me. The first word of that sentence escaped me ; you know I never reproached you, I never will reproach you. But my dear D. your cruel indulgence, your thoughtless and importunate pursuit of my gratification, or of what you imagined would gratify me, has been in its effects to me, as the most bitter enmity. Your solicitude overcame your very sense, your knowledge of my character. You knew me at least inoffensive and uncontami-

nated, with some sensibility, with more diffidence, with melancholy more than either; a blushing boy, who retreated and blushed alike at the superiority of man, and the softness of woman. You knew me averse from dissipation, and loathing depravity. Yet you, Oh, Deloraine! I looked up to you as an elder brother, I leaned on you with full and perfect confidence, I looked in your face almost for momentary direction. Why would you lead one, who trusted you so helplessly, into vice? yes, into vice; whatever you and Hoare may call it, solitude has whispered its right name to me. You made me game without skill, you made me drink without head or taste for wine, you drove me (yes, drove me by ridicule, the most powerful of all conductors,) to vices, from which habitual diffidence and boyish youth rendered me even more abhorrent, and for which intoxication was even a necessary pre-

parative---when you laughed at the sickness of male modesty; oh! that you had known the sickness and the fear I stifled to join the laugh; you kept noisy crowds about me for ever, you hurried me from tavern to tavern, you kept me in a state of artificial madness: oh! that you had left me to myself: I implored, I besought you to do so, I told you I was too young for those things, I begged you to have mercy on my youth; I entreated for a book and the society of the few worthy men who yet condescend to notice me. You know I told you I was but sixteen the first place you dragged me to. While I write this, I feel my forehead and cheeks, pale as they have long been, covered with burning spots. I could not write thus, were a creature in the room with me.

And now that I have written, I reproach myself for it; it was your kindness for me I know; you discovered,

that is, thought you had discovered, that I was unhappy, and drove me into dissipation to forget it. If I was unhappy, it was an unhappiness which dissipation could not remove, you could neither know its cause nor its remedy. But my dear D. should my health be irreparably injured, should your fatal kindness plunge me into an early grave, remember it, I implore you for your own use and monition, and never lead one who trusts you as I did with the openness of youth and affection, into the courses you have led me. The time makes plain language a kind of duty to me.

Should you ever meet with one like me, ignorant, and willing to continue so, do not force him to learn what I have learned so reluctantly, perhaps so fatally; do not feel that my sensations are less painful, because my errors were (you know) involuntary: perhaps they are

more so. I have a jealousy, a restlessness, a shame of myself ; which is always the symptom of early, unhabitual vice. Yet still I have a recurrence of thoughts such as I ought to banish, at least ought not to suffer to please me as they do : and which, when I resist them, return in my dreams. Oh ! I have such dreams ---is there guilt in dreams ? Dear D. write me no more such letters. I don't want to know about the low curricles and the Hessian boots. I will have neither, I will not run in debt ; whether my thoughts will betray me or not, I have a power over my actions.

I do not wish to part with my horses, because my groom is a well-principled lad, and supports his widowed mother on his wages. If J——s insists on being paid before I receive my next remittance, dispose of my watch for what you can get for it, and satisfy him. I have no

wish to distress him, and I cannot bear a tradesman's clamours.

But I will strip myself to my last shilling, I will go without a meal and without a coat, I will deal with Jews, with the devil, before I will apply to my poor uncle for a shilling beyond my allowance. Don't mention it again D. don't hint at it, do'nt think of it. I have been compelled to give him a blow already which he will never recover, or I either; I will at least never repeat it: my only consolation is, I was compelled, my extravagance was involuntary; I never will be stabbed again by his anger and his forgiveness. D. you know me to possess some resolution, should my uncle through your, or any other means, hear of or suffer from my lapses again, I will plunge myself into the sea that is heaving in my sight this moment.

O. BETHEL.

P. S. Don't shew my letters to any one, I cannot bear to be laughed at, you know I cannot; let them think me a gay fellow still, I am satisfied that no one should know me—but you.

To Mrs. G——re.

Black Rock, October 8.

* * * * *

My plan has succeeded; the family has removed to the Rock, where they will stay as long as he will, his motions are so irregular. In such wretched plans my life is wasted; yet to see him is not so much, to see him as he is now, pale, dejected, unhappy, is perhaps the most useful lesson of pain and penitence any object can teach me now; at all events I have the indulgence, and I may have the improvement---indulgence---who but myself could bear the indulgence of his sight? When I see his pale cheek as he

passes unconsciously near me, when I see him stretched for hours on the rocks almost beneath my window, when I see him break from the gaze which his fine and wasted form draws from the passenger, when I see him as I do to-night, by the strong lights that burn in his room, traversing it slowly, and sometimes leaning against the window, and seeming to listen to the toll of the bell, that tolls for a funeral by night; when I see this, and feel him sigh as he listens; when I see this, and feel the bitterness of love and death, and my forehead throbs, and a gush of agony rises in my throat, and tears, in which I am wasting away, mingle as they flow, with the broken voice of sorrow and love—is this indulgence—it is—

* * * * *

We meet like spirits, my love is hardly mortal. The flush of early feeling, the hope, which all wild and impossible as it is,

we yet cannot separate from love, the rich, warm, summer-tint that passion sheds on life—are all gone. The change from these to the objects that now surround me; to the darkness of autumn, the cold and solitary shores, and the pale form that wanders along them, is not greater than the change in my mind and senses; I hardly see him with the eyes of sense: will all the fine pageantry fade thus from my mind! will the light that has played on my path be darkened before that is finished! I would I could lie down and die in its setting sweetness.

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I will not tell you the strange device I have employed for---what I can hardly tell, whether it will produce pleasure or pain to me.

ELMAIDE ST. CLAIR.

To J. L. Deloraine, Esq.

October 11.

* * * * *

I CAN conceal nothing from you, it has been the habit of my mind to pour out all it knows or feels with childish profusion on you ; if I have met no acquaintance, I have met *un avanture*. I found the other day in a recess among the rocks, (where I often go, when the tide is out, for shells) a letter tied with a bunch of sea-weed, as if some nereid had floated on a wave with it there ; it was addressed to me, I opened it, and have every day since found one in the same place. The style of them is as singular as the circumstances ; they are written in a female hand, and are evidently the production of a female mind, and that mind strongly tinged with romance and the Romish religion.

They are full of a pure and mystic morality, they present the picture of a melancholy and impassioned mind, feeding itself with the visions of religion, of a life and feelings chequered with gleams of devotion, which pours over it a light, sombrous, and fitful and fantastic, as the colours which fall from the "storied window" of a cloister, on the ghostly cheek of its inmate, who gazes on it in the moonlight. These letters contain many monitions (which seem to imply a knowledge of the events of my life) and exhortations and promises, but the very promises are tinged with melancholy, and there is a pining and compulsory tone where they speak of the worthlessness of this world and its enjoyments, which seems the tone of a mind not convinced by its own reasoning, and more willing to condemn than to relinquish them.

All this is extraordinary, but what is still more so, my invisible correspondent has insisted on a relation of my life, and I have complied. I deposit my papers every day in the same place where I find the letters, and they are re-placed the following day. It would be impossible to copy them in the interval, and if it were possible, there could be no danger, no one can make a bad use of the confessions of a penitent of eighteen.

ORMSBY BETHEL.

P. S. Not a line from Hammond or my sister.

* * * * *

The narrative which I wrote for my nameless correspondent I here insert for you. It contains an account of the early parts of my life, such as every one loves to recall : it is marked by one peculiarity.

The secret which it was the business of my life to watch, and in the concealment of which life had been almost destroyed, is told here without reserve.

It is hardly possible to explain the feeling that prompted me to this disclosure. But the wildness of solitude and romantic dejection, the mysteriousness of my correspondent, and the high and peculiar tone of the letters I received, altogether left an impression on my mind, as if I had to do with some superior being, whom to deceive was impossible, and with whom duplicity would be as much a folly as a crime: the narrative contains more of opinions than events, I know not whether that will be a defect or a recommendation to you.

I have none of the common motives of biographers for writing my own life. I have neither ambition of praise, nor desire of vindication, I have no wish to revile or panegyriser, to accuse or to defend.

For me life has no further employment, or hope, or charm.

I was born at Ailly au Clochers in France, about the beginning of the year 17— ; it would be difficult to discover in what month, for in an ebullition of revolutionary philanthropy, in September 92, they burnt the prior of the benedictine convent there, an old, helpless, harmless priest, and lit the pyre with the registers of his church, in which my name I have heard was inserted. In my childhood I was hurried about from place to place, I knew not by whom, or for what purpose : I was never taught to call any one parent or relative, but if not, no early feeling was excited in me but that of distinction. *Le petit Milor Anglois*, *le bel Enfant*, and other names of praise and deference, taught me even in infancy to recognize that passion, which has been the distinction and the scourge of my existence, taught me to

look on myself as a being marked by superiority from the beginning, very early, so early that I forgot my informer. I heard that my parents were Irish. At about seven years old, I remember being struck by the difference between the glad and sunny skies of Languedoc, and the dark, heavy air I then began to breathe in London, and still more strongly by the obsequiousness and pliancy of my late attendants, contrasted with the rough looks and language of the English.

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I remember being placed with a person and his wife, who occupied a small house in Tottenham-Court-road, and whose modes of life were so still and monotonous, that they sobered and fixed my childish attention; objects recurring so unfailingly made an impression on my mind, which they could never have owed to their importance. I exercised a degree of observation on the habits of this man and

his wife, such as now appears marvellous to me, what I recollect of them I shall yet relate, for the mind pleases itself with its early acquisitions. They had been in business, and for many years were content with the silent accumulation of moderate profits; at length they fancied themselves weary of the drudgery of trade, they called in their debts, examined their capital, reminded each other that they had no children, and no expectation of them, and that it was foolish, with the means of ease, to exhaust life in unnecessary toil. When they had made this discovery, their joy was great; they wondered what demon had prevented them from making it before; and that they might lose no time in taking advantage of it, sunk their property for an annuity, and took a small house in Tottenham-Court-road. In a few weeks the bustle of removal was over, there was nothing more to propose or to do. They sat down

in their easy chairs, looked in each others faces for happiness, and met only discontent and weariness : shame, however, prevented their communicating a mutual wish that they were back again in Botolph-lane, and from those who visited them in curiosity or in idleness, they extorted perpetual praises of a stagnant pool in the middle of their garden, in the weeds of which they had entangled an artificial duck, and of the rural murmurs of an hogfeeder's styes next door, by whom (in the triumph of her heart) Mrs. Simpson assured her visitors her mornings' rest had been broken ever since her removal to the *country*.

They had resided twelve years in this place, when I became their inmate, and with every year had their discontent, disappointment, and weariness increased.

By that time all struggles had ceased ; they had subsided into torpid dejection.

I can recollect no one day that differed from another. They rose late with wonder at each other's sluggishness, and a resolution to commence an habit of early rising the following Monday.

The morning was passed by Mr. Simpson in examining books of obsolete accounts, which he had brought with him from the city "against a rainy day," as he said in totting up sums, whose numbers he could by that time tell blindfold, and when he had found the amount, yawning and beginning again; sometimes he strolled about the house, examined locks that did not want repairing, shook his head at the weather glass, and projected a removal of the clock from behind the parlour door, where its ticking made him melancholy after dinner. His wife retired to her room, examined the contents of old drawers, discovered that things grew yellow by lying by, and resolved to

expose them to the sun some day in the following week ; at a certain hour she visited the kitchen, watched the intrusion of strange cats, and detected the turnspit in his many contrivances to escape from duty, by which she boasted, dinner was prevented from being five minutes later than the time. They dined early without appetite, and retired early without drowsiness, sometimes a walk was proposed, on the appearance of a fine morning, but then the weather-glass was examined, till the time for walking had passed away ; and looking wistfully at each other, they sunk into their easy chairs, and counted how many minutes till dinner. Sunday indeed presented some variation of habits ; they had much of that attentiveness and decency in matters of religion which the middling orders of the English are distinguished by ; solitude had driven them to meditation, and of a long evening they sometimes looked into the Bible in self-

defence; not however without some compunction for the unfitness of the study on any evening but that of the Sabbath. That day of employment threw a beam of cheerfulness even on Saturday; it reminded them to compare the distance of the nearest churches, to lay plans for possessing themselves of the seats adjacent to the reading desk, and not suffer, by a foolish forbearance, the church-warden's wife to deprive them of the largest cushions. The day itself saw them punctually attend service thrice, and laboriously fill up the intervals with what they believed to be appropriate reading. They never read the scriptures, habitually I mean, the lessons of revelation could hardly have been reconciled with a life of squalid indolence, and hopeless depression; but every religious work, whose tone was not lofty or peculiar, perused in the intervals of public service with a rueful tenacity, "a sad civility,

that yielded neither to difficulty nor weariness."

Sermons, treatises, exhortations, were all alike devoured; as they proceeded their faculties grew more cloudy from perplexity, and their tempers more sour from restraint; yet still they read on, without any discrimination between the spirit and the forms of religion, to believe that what they did was right, though ready to gnaw their own flesh with weariness and vexation. Such was their superstitious adherence to hours, that I have seen them checked in the midst of a bitter contention, which the characteristic peevishness of the day had excited, by recollecting it was time to read prayers, and renewing it again the moment the volume of peace was closed. I have heard Mr. Simpson complain bitterly of a preacher, whose sermon had dismissed him (from his slumber) a few minutes earlier than usual, which he observed, "was a very

unfair thing of a Sunday, when a man has nothing at home, but—his wife. They were seldom disturbed by visitors: some city cousins had *called of them* during the first months of their retirement; but their curiosity was soon satisfied, and they had no other motive for their visits, for it was known that the Simpsons had sunk their property for an annuity. Besides, Mr. and Mrs. S. had discovered (what elderly retired people are very apt to discover) that it was to preserve the neatness of an house open to the intrusion of strangers, and that of the three visitors who had disturbed them during the last month, one had neglected to clean his feet on the scraper, another had placed the hearth-brush on the wrong side of the fire-place, and a third had stirred the fire, though the price of coals had been hinted in his hearing, and his remark on the coldness of the weather had been contradicted. In the misery in which I

found them (the misery of ease unpurchased by labor, and indulgence unpreceded by restraint, of solitude without any of the resources which solitude requires, and of mental disquietude which could not be charged on external objects) they had not submitted without struggles of resistance, without much wonder at their own waywardness, and repeated accusations of the state of the weather. At length in despair they advertised for a lodger, and endeavoured to persuade each other they would find a pleasure in society yet untried. "At all events," said Mr. S. "we shall not lose by it." The persons to whom I was committed, understood that they were sober and creditable, and accordingly I was placed with them as the son of a gentleman abroad; masters attended me at their house, and as my allowance was ample, I was treated with as much distinction as narrow minds could bestow. But solitude was no

scene for me. In a few months the lassitude I witnessed, invaded me, I lost my appetite and my complexion; I began to loath myself, and every thing around me, nothing could inspire me to diligence, or invite me to play. The images of sleepy depression I beheld, benumbed me; it is indeed impossible to imagine a life of more weariness, debility, and degradation. Yet this is adopted by thousands, and at some part of life, its outline is sketched by almost all, as the repose of labour, and the indulgence of age. Its effect on me has been to make me abhor the idea of tranquillity, to shrink from retirement, as from ignominy and misery, and to regard such objects and proposals with a mind of instinctive and incurable dread, which my reason is perpetually disclaiming. When they found my health was injured by the solitary dejection of home, they sent me to school. * * * *

* * * *

There is nothing I dislike more than an abstract delineation of passion and character. Man is not to be represented by description, but by action. I recollect but few circumstances of my own childhood, but all I recollect is characteristic. When I say characteristic, I do not mean it of the fugitive and venial propensities of childhood, but of those qualities which adhere to and compose the character of the man—such alone are worth relating. Mr. Simpson, who thought he had some degree of knowledge of religious matters, one night took it into his head to examine my proficiency in them. I was not ignorant of the elementary topics he spoke on: at length having warmed himself with their contemplation, he began rather to declaim than to examine. He spoke of the day of judgment. It was impossible even for him to speak on such a subject,

without communicating some awe to a young mind. I listened while he described the reward of the just; I asked eagerly, "would their reward be so public?" "Yes, in the sight of men and angels, in the sight of their enemies," the tears gushed into my eyes—of the remainder of the lecture I have no recollection.

* * * * *

I had been some time at school, when I observed one day a little mishapen urchin assaulting with all the virulence of teeth and nails, a boy who neither made resistance, nor shewed resentment; my blood boiled, I ran up to them. "How can you suffer yourself to be mauled by that little reptile," "Do you not see," said the boy, "that he is weak and a cripple."—"That is a lye," said the cripple, redoubling his blows. "Can you bear," said I "that he should give you

the lye, you are afraid of him, 'tis your cowardice that makes you so patient." The boy made no reply, but when the little wasp had wearied himself, darting his fangs, he approached me quietly. "You are of my own age," said he, "and as strong as I am; I shall readily prove to you that I am no coward."— We fought, and I got a complete beating: sore as I was with my defeat, I admired the boy's patience and courage, and as soon as I was able to speak, I held out my hand to him, and desired we might be friends. "No," said he, repelling my hand, "we can never agree, you are too light-minded for me, you change your opinions, and love and hate too suddenly for me, we should never agree." I remained, gnawing my lip. Some time after the dwarf whose name I have forgot, who endeavoured to make himself dreaded for mischief if not for strength, fastened on

me as a butt for his gibing knaveries. In imitation of Morton's steadiness, I bore his persecutions without wincing, though I would rather have borne the bastinado; ridicule was to me, always, worse than "firebrands, arrows, and death." At length I discovered that the dwarf had stolen some of my books; there was something romantic in the resolution I adopted.

Nothing was easier than to point out the delinquent, but when the books were enquired for, I suffered their loss to be ascribed to my negligence, and was punished without a murmur. On that day Hammond came up to me. "Why did you let your little enemy escape?"—"Because he was my enemy." Hammond looked at me incredulously, "Had I exposed him," said I "you would have believed it done in revenge."—"And was it on my account, you submitted to

be punished when you did not deserve it?" I was silent, he extended his hand to me, then I seized it eagerly. People who read this may smile at the eternal friendships of boys of 10 and 12, yet our friendship has been indissoluble.

CHAP. II.

AFTER this, I will not conceal my own fastidious levity.

A number of us strolled into the fields; it was evening, my companions pursued different sports. I sat down upon a bank, and gazed on the setting sun, and on the colours with which his departing had filled the west, till a tear, of which I knew not the source, came to my eye. No being, from the hour of infancy, ever gazed on nature with a more enthusiastic mind than I did. Hammond came up to me, "Why don't you come and play with the rest of the lads?" I pointed to the glorious western clouds, and motioned him to sit down by me silently. "Come away," said he, pulling me roughly by the arm,

“come along, and join us, the lads will all laugh at you.”—“I do not mind their laughter,” said I, with a look that was designed to speak volumes of indignant sensibility. “But I do,” said he, and was bounding lightly away, when I caught him by the arm. He had shocked and disconcerted me; my whole soul was in a state of revolt and hostility to him. “Hammond,” said I, “here let our ill-concerted friendship end; we have no sympathy of minds, we have nothing in common, here let us part.”—“No, Bethel,” said the manly-minded boy, “him to whom I have promised my regards, I cannot leave so lightly; you embrace a friend, and renounce him; I embrace him, and adhere to him for ever. I have not precisely your feelings, but there are many offices in friendship, beside sitting down with you to weep at the beams of the setting sun.” Such was Hammond; if from these sketches,

the ardour, the ambition, the sanguine levity of my character cannot be sufficiently collected, there will be a stronger exemplification in the events of my life.

Amid the rough encounters of a school, the peculiarities of my character might perhaps have been worn away, had not the state of my health at this juncture made a removal from London necessary.

The cause was singular: no being could live in more contented ignorance of their parentage and connexions than I had done for thirteen years; I know not to what to ascribe it, perhaps to my being too much wrapt in the operations of my own mind. I was one day standing at Mr. S.'s window, his servant was in the room, whom I had never observed as remarkably communicative; an equipage suddenly passed the door, "There is your father," said the servant vacantly. I started—my father—every nerve in my body quivered; I neither ate nor spoke

for the remainder of the day. In the night I recollect something of an obscure struggle, and even in sleep a kind of feverish and blind resistance to some force I could not distinguish; I was at length awakened, and discerned several persons about my bed, with fear in their faces. I learned from their conversation, that I had been found in my sleep attempting to make my escape in the direction of the road through which my father had been pointed to me as passing in the morning. From that period my health gradually declined; and the persons who (by what order I knew not,) occasionally visited me, became so alarmed at my haggard and listless aspect, that they removed me from Mr. S.'s; and believing that a change of air was all the relief I required, sent me to the wilds of Cumberland.

The change did indeed relieve me, but it was by operating on sources of my

complaint utterly beyond their comprehension: when I stood no longer at the window where I seemed for ever to hear the sounds, "there is your father," and from which, while it was day-light, there was no forcing me; while I no longer fixed my straining eyes on the spot where his carriage had disappeared for ever; when in sleep I no longer seemed to hang upon its wheels, and call upon him till the sound died in my lips; when all this ceased, with change of place, my health recovered gradually. I lived with a clergyman, who was both my host and tutor. His house, or rather cottage, stood amid the most wild and ærial scenery of the lakes. I have no intention of making the reader scan the heights of Helvellyn, or follow the windings of Dovedale. But the effect of this scenery on my character was powerful, and almost creative.

All the wandering rays of feeling or

imagination I possessed, were concentrated and conducted by the glorious objects with which I became familiar. My heart wasted its energies on rock and wood, and water. When I first arrived there, I loved to hear children talk of their parents; and I often gazed earnestly in the faces of those who I thought might satisfy the yearnings of my soul, if they would; but the name of father never passed my lips.

When his idea came to my mind, I would rush out with the swiftness of a stag, and try, by climbing and running, to lose myself in the violence of motion. By this means my health grew robust imperceptibly; and to pass my days and evenings amid mountain-breezes, and the healthful strife of exercise was changed from an impulse into an habit.

What dreams were mine for three years! In my wanderings, my mind did not waste itself in marking the shapes of

clouds, or counting the circles made by a pebble in the water ; it was stored with precious and pregnant imagery. My tutor was at least an excellent scholar ; I read with him more of the ancients than boys often read in schools or colleges. He was too indolent to make my education a task ; and we read with intervals and interruptions that facilitated the progress of a mind irregular and restless like mine. In his study, if it deserved the name, were some books which he had brought with him from Oxford, and never opened since ; they were odd volumes of Dryden, Lee, and the dramatists of Charles the Second's time, Milton, Shakespeare, The Arabian Nights Entertainments, Heywood's Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels, Grose's popular Superstitions, Glanville's History of Witchcraft, Magia Adamica, a work very old and scarce, of which the author purports to be Ray-

mond Lully, and Percy's and Evan's collections of old English ballads. What a library for a boy of fifteen, who traversed the solitude of lakes and mountains in the day, and paused to read them amid the evening murmur of winds, and dashing of waterfalls! I became an incurable visionary. The ancient authors I read, instead of correcting, confirmed this habitude. It is a very different thing to read an author at the narrow desk, and in the gross-heated atmosphere of a school; and amid objects which form a comment on the text of the poet, where the mountain air is waving among the pages, and the light that falls on them is chequered by the leaves of a gigantic oak. During three years, my life was a species of romantic intoxication.

The reading of Ossian completed my infatuation. But there was one exercise of mind to which I was so strongly in-

clined, that at length all my meditations tended to, and were lost in it. Amid the spots of quiet clouds that lay scattered over the evening sky, like islands on the great deep; I have imagined some fortunate spot, some abode peopled by fair forms, human in their affections, their habits, in every thing but vice and weakness; to these I have imagined myself giving laws, and becoming their sovereign and their benefactor.

The idea was sufficiently chimerical, for in a state of innocence there was no occasion for restraint; and in the equality produced by universal excellence, there was no room for sovereign or superior. I was therefore compelled to admit some shades into the character of my imaginary community; but I resolved they should be such as held a latent affinity with virtue, or could be easily reconciled to it by legislative discipline and cultivation. I therefore imagined

them possessed of the most shining qualities that can enter into the human character, glowing with untaught affections, and luxuriant with uncultivated virtue; but proud, irritable, impetuous, indolent, and superstitious; conscious of claims they knew not how to support, burning with excellencies, which, because they wanted regulation, wanted both dignity and utility; and disgraced by crimes which the moment after their commission they lamented, as a man laments the involuntary outrages of drunkenness. I imagined a people that seemed to stretch out its helpless hands, like the infant Moses from the ark, and promise its preserver to bless and dignify the species.

When I had conceived this character, such was its consistency, its *vraisemblance*, that I immediately concluded it to be real. I was satisfied there existed such a people—with the hesitation of one

who fears his purpose is suspected, I mentioned the character I had conceived to my tutor, and asked if he thought it possible that any people were distinguished by such features. He answered immediately, that I had accurately described the Irish nation.

From that moment a firm and habitual purpose took possession of my soul. It was my morning's meditation, it was the vision of my night. To be the reformer and legislator of a country I had never seen, nor with one native of which I was acquainted, may perhaps excite a smile of the most piteous contempt; yet, from the effects of this suggestion on my own mind, I am convinced, it is to such musings that we are to trace the source of those lonely, remote events, which have agitated the world, and changed the most settled aspect of things.

CHAP III.

It was in the spring of the year that my tutor was somewhat surprized at receiving the following letter.

London, April 10.

DEAR SIR,

“ I should have written before to thank you for the pains you have bestowed on my son's health and education; but these cursed easterly winds—in short, every circumstance in this infernal country compels me to execrate my own existence. At this moment, the venders of the vilest commodities are vociferating below my window, my very window. In Paris, (while it was Paris) the hotels were enclosed in spacious areas, and the

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intrusions of the canaille effectually prevented. But to return to my son, I am sensible I have not paid him all the attention I ought. Possibly it was fortunate for him, as it was the means of placing him, sir, under your tuition. From such a mode of education, I should indeed have recoiled in my earlier days. But what signifies educating men for polished enjoyments now? there is no polish, no enjoyment; the world has lost all capacity of giving pleasure, or perhaps I have lost all capacity for admitting it. So much the better, the fine champaign of life is all drawn off, and only the vapid lees are left. I remember the time; but women are no longer women, wine is no longer wine, I believe I am no longer myself. I remember the time when—— yet, curse me, if I have so much pleasure in remembering those times either. But I have no business to tease you with my

morbid petulance. I understand, my very good sir, your pupil has grown tall and awkward, and headstrong; you see I give him credit for all the accomplishments a youth educated in England can be supposed to possess. I have felt the disadvantage of not residing in the country where my property lies. I mean, therefore, that Ormsby shall graduate in the University of Dublin, and reside finally in Ireland. The disadvantage of his birth will be overlooked there, or considered rather as a compliment to the country. I intend that his education shall be rigidly regular. By Heaven, I will empty the whole magazine of discipline on him. Since there are no comforts in vice, I will prove that there are some rigours in virtue too. He shall not have the advantage of me both in pleasure and in praise. I understand my agent has settled with you annually for his board, &c. Be pleased to accept of

the enclosed as a mark of my gratitude for your attention to your pupil.

I remain, &c. &c. &c.

LIONEL M. BETHEL."

My tutor was much disturbed at the necessity of answering his correspondent, whom I now understood to be a man of large fortune, and splendid connexions. Whether he suspected me of a degree of refinement, he did not possess himself, I cannot tell ; but he requested me to revise his answer, which was as follows.

SIR,

" I received yours of the 10th instant, which came safe to hand ; but for a small accident it met by falling into my shaving-pot, which however did not signify a rush, your hand being tolerably legible, considering how much you have lived in outlandish parts. As to the easterly winds, they have been very rife in

our parts; but how they could obstruct your letter, I cannot conceive, unless it was to come partly by water. You speak also of certain venders and vile commodities under your window. I am astonished how the police of London can suffer such things; my maid removes them here every morning.

“As to your champaign all being drawn off, I am sorry for it; but cannot say I ever took much to foreign wines, never having tasted any but once at a fellow-commoner’s treat, when being overtaken in liquor, I was found in the quadrangle, and reprimanded by the dean. As to your son, he is a very good young man; but a little flighty or so, which perhaps runs in the family, whereby he is not to blame. I saw some lines in a poem at a friend’s, which exactly describe his character. (I have not the poem myself, because it was written by a Scotsman;) the lines run thus:

“ In sooth, he was a strange and wayward wight,
“ Fond of each gentle and each dreadful scene.”

And the like, which I have forgot.

“ In truth, it grieves my heart to part
with the boy; but I thank you, sir, for
the draft. In truth, I would give as
much money again to keep him with me.
The country to which you are sending
him is a very wild place. I pray Heaven
they may not turn him Papist or wild
Irishman among them. I should have
sent you his last exercise; but supposing
you do not understand Latin,

Remain your's, &c.

J. ADAMS.”

The letter quenched at least half my
desire to see my father. The allusion,
so abruptly made, to my illegitimacy,
shocked and incensed me against one who
could insult the misfortune he had occa-
sioned. Yet with all my resentment, a

secret sentiment of pleasure mingled itself with the discovery. There is perhaps in every mind an habit of considering persons in my circumstances as peculiarly marked out for the great and extraordinary events of life. This conclusion, with whatever justice, I drew at once in my own case; it accorded with the habitual object of my mind, and it reconciled me to imaginary degradation.

I quitted England without seeing my father, and arrived in another country with no more knowledge of my destination, than that which I carried within my own breast. I was placed in the house of a strict Dissenter, and entered the University of Dublin. Perhaps it is expected that I should here speak a few words of that institution. Too much ridicule has been heaped upon it. It has been upbraided with a stupidity, an indolence, a lameness of proficiency, which have been in a great measure the result

of circumstances unavoidable, and now unalterable, in the frame of the institution. In the first place, the fellows, instead of being the lean, secluded students of a cloister, whom it would be as difficult to solicit from its walls, as to make the effigy of its founder descend from his monument, are the inmates of a populous and dissipated city, husbands, fathers of families, men on fire in the pursuit of various distinctions, as churchmen, as preachers, as agreeable and convivial men, formed to embellish mixed society, and allured to it by every tie that has power over the most worldly and tumultuous faculties of the mind. By their obligations as tutors, they are compelled to devote the most numerous hours of the early and vigorous part of life to the tuition of youth. On the number of these their profits principally depend; and a number of these they therefore endeavour to secure, by adopting the

manners, and frequenting the assemblies of the world. When this period is passed, their capacity for business has passed away along with it; they are elderly men, saturated with the irksome routine of collegiate duties, and anxious, by accepting some college living, to escape from tumultuous to pacific indolence. Are these men who can be expected to illuminate the world with those laborious lucubrations, which can only be produced by the union of unbroken solitude, unambitious competence, congenial stillness, and habitual application? Another defect in the constitution of the Dublin University I shall notice, without inquiring whether it is original or voluntary : I mean the total neglect of the most valuable part of literature, modern and native literature, the study of the English language, its writers, its powers, and its productions, the extent of its resources, the laws of its composition, and

the graces of its delivery. Instead of this, the quarterly examinations (a noble exercise of the youthful mind and passions, if rightly applied,) are exhausted in a strife of scholastic quaintness, and hereditary subtleties, which, without enlarging the mind, or unfolding the principles of science, excites a temporary tension, a petulant precocity, an ambitious and straining spirit of conjecture in the mind, more worthy of a Jesuitical seminary, or an examination in the metaphysical grammar of Thomas Aquinas.

The consequence is, that men educated in the College of Dublin, without an immediate view to collegiate distinctions, are in general eminently destitute of collegiate improvement; the flimsy furniture requisite for this temporary struggle is soon thrown aside; and when thrown aside, forgotten for ever: while the substantial panoply that qualifies for

a literary encounter, that cleaves to us even when the period for its use is over—the net of the *retiarius*, can only be employed in the combat; but the arms of the soldier give a “form and pressure,” and military mould, to the limbs, which dignifies the veteran even in the hour of repose.

The students in the University of Dublin are not educated with any consideration for the peculiar faculties of distinct minds; all are alike compelled to read the same portion of the classics and the sciences; there are few encouragements to voluntary application, few outlets for the natural propensities of the genius: yet it is perhaps to such accidental remissions of the rigour of uniformity, such allowed digressions from the path of discipline, that we owe its most felicitous and luxuriant expansions. This, however, may be considered as the necessary evil of every academic institu-

tion; but there is another of much greater magnitude and mischief. I mean the total absence of a final view and reference to the uses of life, and the ornament of profession, in the collegiate education. The superiors of it seem to undergo the same defect in mental vision, that the vulgar do in actual, when they refer the stars of heaven to the concave in which they appear to be placed, without considering them as belonging to a peculiar sphere, and pouring light on space as yet unmeasured and unseen. The use of the principles of logic in every part of life can only be disputed by those who are destitute of its advantages; but I am far from seeing the use of that puzzling and abstract examination in its subtleties, which only excites the vanity of premature and unprofitable acuteness. I shall be thought perhaps to rebel against all collegiate authority, when I decry the other parts of science; yet might it not

be asked of what probable or general use can the Elements of Euclid, the ascent of fluids in capillary tubes, or the revolutions of the cycloid be to the divine, the lawyer, or the physician? I am much mistaken if one student in an hundred carries home with him a taste for, or even recollection of those topics which were only cultivated as supplying the temporary triumphs of the hall. It cannot be urged that it is the duty of a learned boy to cultivate the more abtruse parts of science, as its rewards are promised to those who are distinguished by scientific attainments. The number of fellows is twenty-two, that of the students may amount to some hundreds; according to this answer therefore, the object of this single fountain of national education, is (probably) to make twenty-two pedants, and some hundreds of dunces. If it be indeed necessary for the superiors of this institution to be possessed of certain

cabbala of science, incommunicable, and useless in general society, on which they themselves seldom write, and never converse; yet surely men, whose destination is for the world and its busiest scenes, may be exempted from an obligation to study what it is almost a duty to forget when in the world.

Would not the study of English literature, including (possibly the best productions in) history, the more proximate parts of natural philosophy, civil, rhetorical, critical, and poetical researches, together with the elements of theology, and (most important of all) a summary, but comprehensive view of the evidences of revealed religion, be of more consequence to them, as men and citizens, than what Milton, in his tractate of education, calls the "Intellective Abstractions" of science, in which they only acquire acuteness without penetration, an habit of combination without

comparison, a desire of discovery without investigation? I know the subjects which I consider as most important to the student are not entirely overlooked by the University of Dublin; but they are taught superficially and incidentally, rewards for them are not so frequent, nor is distinction in them (considered as) so honorable. The spirit of these studies is not kept alive by frequent subjects of composition being assigned, by large premiums, and by public competition, while diligence is encouraged, and emulation inflamed at the quarterly examinations, by praise and profit, and celebrity, and a general spirit of exhilarated stimulation, and almost dramatic display, by every thing that can rouse the ambition of talent, and the ardour of youth. What I have said unfavourable of this institution, I have said with sincerity and regret, not as a censure of faults I have laboured to detect, but as an apology for

failings which my zeal to discover excellence may perhaps have magnified. Should the time ever arrive, when education shall be conducted in subserviency to the purposes of life, and colleges shall be considered as vestibules to the great temple of active knowledge, the university shall see the curse and the reproach of her barrenness removed, and her offspring, like Hannah's, more favoured than that of her reproachful rival. Considering merely their native powers of intelligence and application, I know no men more calculated to give to learning the graces of facility, the value of use, and the dignity of virtue, than the fellows and students of the University of Dublin.

Such has been the result of my observation on this institution ; my proficiency in it was moderate, for my mind was occupied by other meditations. On my first arrival in the country, I flattered

myself that I was studying the national character and tracing the germs of patriotism and courage in the face of a peasant, till I found myself gazing on a public building, or an equipage whose whirl stunned me as it passed. There is, perhaps, no discovery so mortifying as this to a Paoli or a Kosciusko of sixteen. At length I suffered myself to sink into the stream of things, sent out every sense in quest of objects of novelty, and in every interval of solitude stamped and writhed under the burden of vacancy, and compared myself to Telemachus in the Isle of Calypso.

But I was soon occupied by other objects, objects which made even my political enthusiasm disappear like a morning's dream; and earth with all its varieties disappear with it. There are in the University of Dublin, as in every other, a number of students devoted to what are called evangelical principles,

that is, with very few exceptions, to strict Calvinism. They exist in a state of secrecy which it is their delight and their employment to maintain; for narrow minds are fond of petty policy. This concealment is however necessary, for the superiors of the college are with reason judged to be averse to Calvinistic principles, whose direction commonly leads their professors to enter into the dissenting ministry. The society is kept together by frequent assemblings, prayers, and discourses, wailings over the degeneracy of the Established Church, and denunciations against those who keep the key of knowledge from the world, "who are destroyed by its lack."

It is impossible, without being a member of such an institution, to imagine its effects on the minds of young men whose religion was the religion of passion, and who were but too much flattered by such a religion. The system of Calvin is

amazingly splendid and awful. A youthful mind in its first pursuit of religion, neither inquires for evidence, nor wishes conviction; it demands something that may fill to the utmost its capacity of the marvellous; something under which its faculties may succumb in mute acquiescence; something that requires not the labour of ascent; but the passiveness of prostration. To such demands the Calvinistic system is abundantly adequate.

I am not about to discuss the falsehood or the truth of the system, but merely to state its effects on my own imagination and feelings. When I speak of Calvinism, I speak of it not as it exists in the writings of that reformer, but in the works of the Presbyterian writers, particularly the silenced ministers of Charles the Second's time, together with the more modern ones of the American divines, Edwards, Flavel, &c.; and the still more modern, Hervey, Romaine,

Doddridge, &c. These men, whatever may be said of the truth or conformity to scripture in their opinions, had the power of recommending them most forcibly to the imagination.

The great evil to be dreaded in a religious system, is that debility and dejection which a mind, unnaturally divided from the world and its ordinary exercises, is but too apt to resign itself to—that burden and heat of the day, under which the most vigorous labourer has sunk, when the freshness of novelty has ceased, and the temptation of reward is still distant. This they have endeavoured to exclude, by keeping the mind in a tumult of trembling solicitude or rapturous elevation, by dividing the long path of duty into strongly-marked stages; assigning to each its peculiar hopes and fears, and struggles and triumphs, diminishing weariness by perpetual variety, abridging distance by the intervention of

new objects, alarming the secure by the fears of declension, and stimulating the urgent by shouts of promise the most sanguine and inspiring. They represent the state of the religionist, under the strongest images that the most vivid and awakening representations of the Jewish history can afford. He who is about to commence a religious course, is described as a Lot, fleeing from the devoted cities of the plain ; as a murderer, whom the avenger of blood has pursued to the very gates of refuge ; sometimes in the milder metaphors of the New Testament, as one who sits with listening watchfulness at the door of hope, as one who waits for the passing sound of blessed steps, and extorts by loud and restless importunity the gift of spiritual light. Those who are supposed to have attained the divine favour, are described as in a state of endless warfare : men, devils, and the world, are in an uproar of hostility

against them ; persons who regard them with perfect tranquillity, are represented as leagued for their eternal ruin ; their persecutions are more mischievous, because they are not violent ; adder's poison is under their lips when they smile, and their kiss is the kiss of Judas. The spiritual mail must not be unlocked, nor the arm relaxed for a moment : all the universe is in arms against the repose of a garret, which is not perhaps visited but by the foot of its inmate ; and amid these menaces of danger, and clamours of encouragement, the initiated walk on enchanted ground, and see Satan fall, like lightening from Heaven, at his progress. Whether this be a just statement of the positions of Revelation I do not propose to examine, but its effects on me were all that could be expected from the union of fancy and passion, with a system of religion that flattered both.

These men of whom I spoke, had

marked my pensive and solitary habits, my diffidence, my absence, and perhaps a certain consciousness of something above the common meditations of youth; they immediately marked me down as a convert, and to make a convert of me was not difficult. The change was flattering to other than religious feelings. Every man naturally feels a degree of envy, mixed with latent dislike, to characters eminent for learning or piety. 'Tis a natural jealousy of a superiority which is determined by no intrinsic principle, but effected by accident or by habit. 'Tis common I believe to all minds, but it is inseparable from minds of grasp and ambition. It was peculiarly the failing of mine.

But to see myself in one moment, by an instantaneous and voluntary change of opinions, enabled to look down with that contemptuous pity which lurking hatred loves to indulge, on those whose

proficiency in the paths of excellence seemed hitherto to have left me at an invidious distance, to sit shaking an head of angry despondency, under sermons that edified a numerous and enlightened congregation; and to pray with splenetic zeal for mercy on the sleeping watchmen, who were at the very moment defending their post with the vigour of talent, and the zeal of talent:—to do this, was but too gratifying to the jealous and petulant pride of young men, over whom the authority they decryd, held an immediate and biting controul, whose recollection aggravated their bitterness. But there was employment sometimes for better feelings in our assemblies; the studious perusal of the Scriptures, the effusion of youthful eloquence, the contagion of mutual exhortation, and the ardour of general devotion, communicated to us sensations that I yet remember with pleasure, though not convinced that their

source was either in reason or devotion. The spirit of our institution was concentrated and kept alive, by an habit which is inseparable from such a system—the habit of compassing sea and land to make a proselyte. Our method was very simple and summary; the heir of a feudal house in Scotland was compelled to empty an horn that contained a gallon, in proof of his having attained the age to claim the honors of his ancestors: we compelled our convert to swallow a long and galling draught from the fountain of Calvin, as a test of his proficiency. We delighted to make the stammerer pronounce the *kibboleth* of a language, of which he yet knew not the elements nor the articulation. I shall give a short specimen of our mode of conversion—it was an unsuccessful attempt of my own; I displayed before my catechumen the whole armory of Calvinistic warfare.

I concluded with placing before him the rubicon of predestination, which if once passed, I hoped forbad all retreat. He was a lad of plain intellects; he was shocked and alarmed. "You must believe predestination," said I. "'Tis impossible," said he. "Tis impossible that you should hope for safety else," said I. "I can never believe it," said he. "You will be damned if you do not," said I. "Why then damn me if I do," said he. I never saw him more.—I only mention these circumstances, because in describing my character, I would describe the causes which contributed to its peculiarities; because I would have some calculation of the force, and some indulgence for the excesses of an enthusiasm, which was at once the enthusiasm of nature, politics, and religion.

But my enthusiasm was not long to be the dream of solitude. Before I had

been a year in Dublin, I received a letter from my father, informing me, he and his family were on their way to Ireland ; that he had a seat in the west, to which he proposed retiring, and taking me with him, that I might acquire the habits of a country resident, and conciliate the favor of my uncle, on whom much depended. This letter left enough open to solicitude ; it neither informed me of the number, nor relations of the family, with whom I was to domesticate, nor any thing relating to this important uncle. But my mind expanded at a change of situation, and I felt at the approach of new relatives, the hope and fear of affection.

From the person with whom I lived, I could learn nothing : my father, though a native of Ireland, had not resided in it since his youth, so I was compelled to pacify myself by wishes, and calculations, and incessant perusals of the letter, in which no diligence could discover affec-

tion. The vessel in which they embarked for Dublin, from some part of the coast of Lancaster, was so beset by unfavorable winds, that they were at length compelled to land in an obscure port in the north of Ireland; and my father, exhausted by fatigue and illness, determined to travel by slow stages across the country to his western villa:—alike averse from the distresses of navigation, or the tumults of Dublin. He sent his Frenchman in his chariot to acquaint me with this arrangement, and to desire me to join him in Connaught as soon as possible. I obeyed him directly.

My fellow-traveller appeared likely to gratify the feelings with which my heart was swelling. He was my father's confidential servant, he had lived with him many years, and he had all the communicativeness of his nation.

But with the true officious politeness of a Frenchman, he would speak nothing

but English, though I wished to converse with him in his native tongue, which I spoke with sufficient fluency, and in compliment to me he persisted in talking bad English with a French accent and idiom, in preference to a medium of language common to us both. With the communicativeness, he united much of the superficial knowledge of a Frenchman, he had been intimate with many parts of life. He was a vehement aristocrat, and execrated the modern regime.

He began by repeating some fragments of the classics which he had learned while a porter at one of the foreign colleges, and expatiated on the beneficial effects of a system in those seminaries, which compelled the students to get a great part of the classics off by heart, as an exercise of memory. I observed that the University of Dublin paid more attention to the cultivation of sciences than of languages.

He replied, "It was then a pity that the University of Dublin did not adopt the Marchioness du Chatelet's comment on Newton's philosophy."—"Is it not still better, monsieur, that we study Newton in his own text?"—"Ah non, monsieur, Newton was a very weak writer, he said some good things, but depend on it he never would have been noticed but for the Marchioness du Chatelet."

"I understood," said I "Newton was sufficiently popular, before he had the honor of being noticed by the marchioness." "I can assure you, monsieur," said he, "that he would never have been known in France, but for that fortunate event."

I now found that France and the world were synonymous in the language of a Frenchman. After this national defeat, I attempted to lead up another column of literature, and observed that the English

had improved so much in polite letters since the institution of their colleges, that it was to be lamented part of the collegiate studies did not include the classical compositions in their own language. M. Masseau admitted that our polite literature must have undergone some improvement since the reign of Queen Anne, "For," said he "about that time you might have learned to compose tragedies, as one of your authors was prompted by the good genius of your nation to translate Racine's *Andromaque*. Another, I believe, attempted to communicate to you the beauties of Corneille's *Cid*, and before that," said he, "I believe Mr. Dryden attempted to translate Du Fresnoy's *Art of Painting*." In vain I endeavoured to undeceive him with regard to these productions, and assure him that many English tragedies were held in higher value than the translations he mentioned. To strike me

dumb, he reminded me that the Cid had been translated by (Cibber) the laureat, as a resistless argument of the dignity of the undertaking, for in the imagination of this homme de vieille cour, whatever was connected with royalty must be great, and a work translated by the poet laureat must have been a work to which the nation looked up for delight and illumination. To prove that we were not wholly unacquainted with the tone of poetry before the date he mentioned, I at length ventured to pronounce the names of Shakespeare and Milton. He started with evident displeasure, but recovering himself, observed that Milton might have polished his native barbarism, as he understood he had passed some time at Paris during his tour: "mais, monsieur," added he, "what poetry could be expected from a man who hated kings, and wore latchets in his shoes?" I observed that the manners of a court (par-

ticularly that of Charles the 2d) had little conciliating in them to the purity of Milton's mind." "It was the only civilized court England ever saw," replied M. Masseau, "the manners were perfectly French."

This was unanswerable. Of Shakespeare he spoke as indignantly as ever Voltaire did. "That author," said he, "has not more than a scene or two in rhyme in any one of his plays."

I ventured to ask was it not possible that poetry could speak any language but that of rhyme; he stared at me as if I wanted to new-model his creed, and then answered, "When did you hear, monsieur, of the French tragedians, having used any other?" Weary of his dogmatizing, I turned the discourse to my family. He said, it consisted of my father, mademoiselle his daughter, and her governess. I asked with a burning cheek, if my father had been married.

“ Non, monsieur, he was *un homme des bonnes fortunes*, he had many arrangements, and would never have known the number of his children, had not un malheur triste compelled him to inquire into how many chances of comfort were left him.” “ What malheur was so fortunate for his family !” said I.—“ He had a son, monsieur, the finest youth in the world, whom he had with him from the first, and whom he was fond of *à la folie*. They lived in France, and lived like brothers; they had their separate arrangements; they neither envied nor censured each other; it was a spectacle of improvement for the whole world. At length, the horrid revolution drove them from France; they came to England, and imagined they still might live, as in France. But who could dream of living *comme un honnête homme dans ce pays barbare*?

“ An English Milord was so savage as to

observe some attentions your brother was in the habit of paying to his wife. He challenged him, they fought, and *mon pauvre maître* fell on the first fire. I carried home the body to Monsieur, and assured him that his son had fallen, covered with glory.

“Monsieur was at first overcome by the shock, he threw himself on the corse, and in his despair used some expressions, altogether unworthy the greatness of his soul ; he accused himself as the murderer of his child, and bewailed the example, whose influence had led him to end a life of vice by an untimely death. As for me, I wept, I lamented, I made myself unhappy a thousand ways, but still I remembered that the young Monsieur B. had perished, as every *homme galant* would wish. After this, your father’s spirits and health declined rapidly ; I did every thing I could, I prepared *les petits soupers*, and *les petits fillettes* as usual.

But he had lost all relish for either! in fact he soon conceived the idea of collecting the remains of his family, and retiring with them to Ireland. I expressed a sensible regret at this resolution, which he mistook for an unwillingness to accompany him. He therefore offered me a splendid *douceur*, and a thousand thanks for my services. But a Frenchman knows not how to leave a master who values a Frenchman. Penetrated with the most lively despair at the thoughts of deserting him, I threw myself at his feet, and declared my resolution to follow him, even to Ireland. I by no means despair of passing a tolerable life even here; every where there are means of pleasure to a Frenchman, and to make perpetual pleasures for myself, *fait tout ma philosophie.*" When I looked at the little shrivelled figure, which, in all the deformity of old age, aggravated by the extreme of antiquated fashion, promised itself "per-

petual pleasures," I could hardly suppress a smile. He observed it, and supposing it excited by his vivacity, began to give proofs of it, I could have dispensed with; he sung chansons d'amour in a voice that drowned the rattle of the wheels, and when we stopped for the first night, requested to have the honor of discovering for me some *petit demoiselle, pour passer le temps.*"

I declined his services, and the colour which I could not prevent mounting to my very forehead, filled him with a surprise which was very visibly mingled with contempt.

On the evening of the second day, we passed through Banagher, a town at the extremity of Leinster, at whose foot flows the Shannon, dividing that province from Connaught.

We crossed a bridge of some antiquity, and were in the west of Ireland. For some way, the road, following the windings

of the Shannon, and varied by the eminences on its shores, was beautiful. Delighted with the contrast between these green and winding roads, and the joyless bogs of the King's County, I gazed about me, till Masseur pointing out to me on the bank of the river a cluster of ash and poplar, among which rose the roof of a villa, informed me that was my father's residence. He had called it Lemon-grove from a sickly imitation of the luxuriant verdure of France, which he had endeavoured to introduce into the plantations. I sprung from the carriage with an heart that longed to love. I saw none but servants: after some inquiry, Masseur learned that my father had retired to his room, that this was a signal for universal silence, that Madame la Gouvernante had therefore gone to her study where she usually passed her evenings, and my sister to her apartment, which neither of them quitted till the

first signs of life were given from the invalid's chamber next morning.

I threw myself on a sofa dispirited; the servants approached to inquire if I wanted any thing, I answered myself, "A father:" willing however to conciliate him by an early obedience to his modes of life, I desired to be shewn to my room; it was twilight, and while the servant went for candles, I heard a light step approaching the room, I raised my head, a female figure stood tremblingly at the door. "If you are my brother," said a soft voice, "tell me so, for I have risked much to see you to-night." I rose, and approached her, we had never met before; but the confidence of nature was in our hearts; we embraced, and expressed our delight at meeting, and when we had done so, repeated it again: for mutual ignorance precluded communication, we had nothing to ask or relate but our joy.

Lights were now brought in ; I drew my sister to the seat from which I had risen, and gazed on her; her age appeared about my own, her figure slight, her face pale, her manners timid and dejected. She had no beauty but of expression, and no graces but those of simplicity and affection. " My father," said she, " is a wretched invalid. He passes the day in pain, and the night in sleeplessness ; of what rest he can get, he is therefore very covetous, and we retire early that it may not be disturbed, but I am sure when he sees you he will love you ; only enter his room quietly, and take care not to praise the climate. As to Miss Percival, you will find it not so easy to conciliate, or rather to conquer her, for she is a great disputant, and the most terrible scholar breathing ; she gives no quarter, and death or victory must be your motto, if you engage with her. But she is a woman of great talents no doubt, as my constant

head-aches can testify. Dear, dear Ormsby, how I have longed for a brother, or any thing to love in this place: there is so much reasoning, and no conviction, and so much indisposition, without any tenderness, that I think I scarce have had an happy moment till this." This happiness however we were afraid to prolong; we again whispered our joy and affection, and separated.

CHAPTER IV.

I WAITED in the morning, like a school-boy who expects to be called to a task. I was at length summoned to breakfast, at which I found my sister presiding, and Miss Percival reading. The latter possessed traces of distinguished beauty still diffused over a form no longer young, and evidently impaired by ill-health. She addressed me with more emotion than I expected, which however she instantly suppressed. "I don't know to what hours you are accustomed, Ormsby," said Sybilla, attempting domestic conversation, "but I conjectured that as a traveller you would not like to be summoned too early." "How often have I told you," said Miss P. "to consider the division of time is voluntary and artificial, one of the numerous abuses of the present system

How absurd to conceive an union between the calls of appetite or any other of the animal functions, and the motions of a clock." "I only apprehended my brother might be fatigued," said Sybilla. "There is no such thing as fatigue," said Miss P. "Fatigue is only an acknowledgement that matter predominates over mind; an acknowledgement, extorted not from truth, but from weakness: were the mind sufficiently abstracted in its peculiar operations, 'tis highly possible that a man might be running full speed all his life, without being conscious of it, and go round the world for the same purpose that others sit down to study." I affected to admire this improvement on the Peripatetic philosophy, but the lady disclaimed any resemblance, she spoke of the ancients with contempt; "What," said she, "could be the result of efforts made by beings, of whom many believed in a God, and some even held the utility of religion?"

reserved for this age to be blest by the instructions of sages, who first unfolded the omnipotence of mind, the perfectibility of man, the mortality of the soul, and the non-existence of an intelligent cause. But alas!" she continued, "what has been the reward of their zeal, and the result of their labours! some of them have been pumped, some put in the pillory, many hissed and pelted from the tribunes, whence they were about to dispense illumination, and many driven to the great western wilderness, to sow the seeds of intellectual regeneration, amid the unsophisticated sons of nature, whom we term the savages of North and South America." Sybilla threw up her eyes in painful resignation; at this moment my father's bell rung, and Masseau came in to inform me, he would see me, a summons I expected with impatience still. As I hesitated at his door, I would have given a world for positive instructions, how to approach

him, and please him by my approach, but when it was opened, I yielded to the impulse that thrilled through me, and rushing forward, I knelt by his knee, and called him, "Father."

"Vastly well, vastly well indeed," said he in a weak, querulous tone, "you have been instructed to do all this, and you do honor to your instructions." "I hope I do," said I rising, and recovering myself, "for my instructor was my own heart."

"Are you so anxious to display that you are six feet high," said he sharply, "that you cannot bear the posture of affection for one moment?" "Oh tell me only what posture to assume, what language to speak, tell me but what will please you, and"—

"You have asked a most painful question, I know not what can please me, I wish I could discover it myself; perhaps with your assistance—but no—no—it

would be cursed meanness in me to be pleased with what I can enjoy, now, when I have lost all that is worth enjoying." "And I have just found all I would wish to enjoy." "What is that?" "A parent." "True, and in most delectable circumstances, just where every tall, florid, forward boy of sixteen would wish to find a parent, feeble, and sickly, and dispirited, that he may insult him with his youth and spirit; tell me now plainly, a'nt you proud of the contrast between us?" "I am, for I feel proud of the powers that may be employed for your amusement, for your recovery." He looked at me earnestly, the flush of speaking was over, my face was on fire with tears and blushes. "I have half a mind to punish you by taking you at your word, and making you give me my drops this moment." I turned round eagerly to Masseau for the drops; the good-natured Frenchman gave them to me as eagerly, my father swallowed them from

my hand. "A Ganymede," said he; "but curse me if you can convert ether and laudanum into nectar. But go away, child, (for remember a child you must be to please me) go away, for you are too like your brother Everard in every motion, except that he never offered to give me my drops."

The family did not assemble till dinner; then the conflict commenced; to which Sybilla had alluded; the perpetual conflict of jarring opinions, and feelings, and habits. Yet I was still so unacquainted with them, that I attended more to their persons than their conversation. My father was a diminutive figure, whose motions, when not distorted by pain, possessed exquisite grace, and whose manners, when not discoloured by the gloom of ill-health and spleen, displayed the most dazzling polish of artificial suavity. A slight observation confirmed the character his letters indicated.

He was an enervated libertine, who had lost the pleasures of sense, and had no others to supply their place ; yet he was sufficiently intellectual to feel the abuse of early advantages, and had sensibility enough to feel that he might have acquired virtue and happiness: but the conviction came too late to bring any thing but pain to a mind vitiated by indulgence, and embittered by disease. His pride and his habits alike forbad him to believe that there were pleasures which he had not enjoyed ; he loathed the idea of moderate enjoyment, or domestic peace ; he shrunk from the names of sensibility, affection, or worth, because he hated to reproach himself with their past neglect, and feared to be reminded of their future responsibility.

He treated all pretensions to qualities which he had not possessed or valued as affectation and imposture, and gave every one credit for the vices he had practised

whether guilty of them or not. "Every man," he often said, "would be luxurious, if like him he could afford luxuries; every man would like him be a libertine, if he had the same exquisite perceptions of pleasure." Of what remained to him, he appeared sufficiently jealous; he dressed himself with the most expensive elegance, and covered his table with such delicacies as I had never before beheld, and of which in the intervals of pain he partook with a voracity that often renewed it in the very act: this, however, instead of checking him only suggested curses against his cook or his wine-merchant, to whose defects and adulterations he charged all he suffered, and then hastened to prepare himself by medicine for another repetition of indulgence and pain. But pain was not the only impediment to his indulgences: Miss P. never lost an opportunity of admonition and reproof, which these seasons afforded

her; and though she performed every little office about him with a minuteness of attention, which surprised me as much as the freedom she was allowed in her severity, yet she indemnified herself for the trouble by incessant declamation against the mischief of luxury, and the meanness of appetite.

All dinner-time was passed in altercation, to which Sybilla listened silently from fear, and I from amazement. The scene too was sufficiently strange; my father seated in his velvet chair, enveloped in his pelisse, and surrounded by French servants, who had scarce time to carry back and forwards the variety of things he tasted and dismissed; and to answer with shrugs the "diable" and "peste" with which they were greeted at every step.

On the other side, Miss P. in an attitude that could neither be called sitting nor leaning; her plate the furthest thing

from her at the table, reading intently, and every morsel she swallowed, lamenting the suspension of intellectual operation. "If you can cut that chicken pie," said my father, "send me some of it. I would have it brought to me; but this *étourdi bête* would derange all the liqueur."

"If the human mind were in the exercise of its full powers, your wish would bring the pie to you, as easily as it would bring the chicken to your mouth, were it on your plate. But how long shall we be condemned to regret the predominance of matter over mind?"—"We have no reason to regret the predominance of matter in your discourses. But what the devil are you using the handle of the fork for instead of the prongs?"—"Why," said Miss P. "do the Chinese use neither knife nor fork? Why do the Abyssinians use a knife with their fingers? Why"—"Oh! curses

and confusion," said my father, "now for an hour of declamation, and the pie will be cold; who but you ever thought of reasoning at a dinner-table; is reason necessary to handle a knife and fork, or to move the jaws?"

"Undoubtedly it is," replied the lady, "it is our privilege to reason on every part of life. Does not reason assist me to refute your complaints, does not reason dictate my replies?"—"No, upon my soul, it does not," said my father, relieving his pain by a sneer. "It is impossible," he continued, filling his mouth, "this can do me good, while, like Pistol in the play, I am compelled to 'eat and swear' at every mouthful."—"Anger," said Miss P. "as it contributes to ferment the animal juices, may probably contribute to trituration and digestion."—"By Heaven, you talk of man as if he were a machine."—"Tis you who rather wish to consider woman as a ma-

chine.”—“ So I do,” said my father with bitterness, “ a machine of fortune.” —“ We have always differed in our sensations of pain, because we differ in our ideas of it. But if I am allowed to define”——“ Excuse me, I beg; if I am spared the definition of pain, I shall probably escape the sensation.”

“ It is impossible to reason with you. The woman who could communicate with your ideas, must be utterly destitute of any herself; she must be a domestic drudge, broken by the slavery of common life, and the misfortune of a religious education.”—“ Religious education,” said my father, arguing from his own ideas, “ is no misfortune on earth to a woman. Some of the finest women I ever knew in France were immensely religious, and were just as punctual at mass as at their assignations.” Here the arrival of the second course presenting a pair of ducks *a la rohan*, engaged his

whole attention ; and Miss P. read and reasoned *seulé* for the remainder of the meal ; which the dessert, and a variety of liqueurs and wines, protracted for nearly three hours.

When this business was at length concluded, my father would willingly have tried to sleep ; but it was necessary for him then to attempt to take some exercise. He had been desirous to qualify the indulgences of the table, by taking a few turns in the garden after it. This was a terrible moment to him ; he looked wistfully around, drained his last glass, sighed heavily, and rose from his chair. The garden, which sloped to the brink of the river, sheltered and shaded by the boughs of every light and water-loving tree, was a spot to tempt the wanderings of a voluptuary ; but my father had now no sense but that of taste ; the pure air chilled him, and the rich, soft colourings of the sky and earth were tinged by the

complexion of his mind. His feelings were very peculiar. The strength of youth and spirit was necessary to support his existence; yet youth and spirit offended him, for he was still jealous of his personal advantages, which had once been eminent; and he believed youth and animation were only displayed to insult him. I had hastened forward to offer him my arm, (when he attempted to walk) but he rejected it after an angry comparison between his nature and mine. He then leaned on Masseau for a few moments; but finding my steps firmer than those of his old domestic, returned to me again; but told me there was no occasion that I should stoop to him in that invidious manner.

I wished to suspend his uneasiness and my own, and poured out my praise on the objects that were around us, delightful as they were to the eye of novelty, and the mind of youth, with all the

lavishness of natural pleasure. He checked me with impatience. "I cannot endure to hear you. If it were so, why does it not strike my feelings as it does yours? I will not believe that others can feel pleasure where I feel only weariness and disgust. 'Tis the language of a schoolboy, a language you must unlearn, as you have learned it. I talked it once myself as fluently as you; but even when I talked, I did not believe it. These things are purely mechanical; as long as the senses minister to the mind, the mind must depend on their ministry.

"Eschylus got drunk to compose his tragedies. The Venus of Apelles was said to have fed upon roses. Another worthy of antiquity was said to be 'ebrius nectare.' I try to talk the language of a schoolboy on your account; but I will now talk the language of a moralist. To every man whose ap-

petite is good, and rest undisturbed ; whose enjoyment of life is never diminished by sleeplessness or indigestion, the sky is for ever tinged with blue, and the whole system of things is unexceptionable. This is the true Claude Lorraine-tint of life. Burgundy gives its own blush to every object you see through it. The great secret of happiness is the combination of youth and pleasure with health ; and when the former and latter have departed, (as they must) try still to retain the middle one. Our very virtues are only another name for the effects of a good meal on a good frame of health, under the influence of an exhilarating atmosphere.

“This is the whole of it ; it sickens me to hear of sensibility and affection, natural or artificial, &c. &c.—Who ever was benevolent amid the rage of hunger ? Try if you could listen to the most affecting tale of calamities under the ri-

gours of a polar night. Ask a man in the paroxysms of gout to shed a tear for any one's distresses but his own. Ask a benighted traveller to pause over the sadness of a sentiment amid the rage of a storm. All our sensibility is the bastard offspring of pride and indolence. Reposing on our couches to satiety, we wish to diversify our sensations by artificial uneasiness, and therefore pretend to feel for visionary sufferings.

“ But real pain soon cures us of our affectation; and real pleasure (if we could know what it is,) would perhaps cure us of pretensions to imaginary ones. You pretended a few minutes ago to dislike the wine I pressed you to take: and now you pretend to luxuriate in what you call ‘ the rich and weeping softness of a watery landscape.’ This is all nonsense and self-imposture. Champagne (when it is good, I mean) has always the same power of stimulating the spirits, though

trees and water have not, for they have lost their power of stimulating mine long ago. And it is to be hoped when you come to my years, that is, I mean to my——pshaw!—experience—you will look upon nature with the same disgust that I do.” This was spoken at intervals; but with an emphasis and deliberation that shocked and distressed me. I tried to soothe him, however, for I hoped his words had been extorted by the acrimony of pain. I admitted that much indulgence must be allowed to one who suffered so much, and that the spirits of an invalid required the resources of even artificial enjoyment. “I have none others left me,” said he with violence, and panting with the burden of intemperance; “if all the pleasures of man were those of temperance and exercise, what would become of me?”

“I hardly keep on the level of existence with all the aids that indulgence can

give me. The best cook I could procure for enormous wages to come with me to this cursed country, can hardly excite my appetite. Along with my coffee I regularly drink the most potent liqueurs I can swallow; yet my digestion and sleep are still disturbed. What would become of me if I were to be temperate? I who have an imposthume in my head, an obstructed respiration, an abscess in my side, and—hell in my heart.”

I listened with horror and compassion. I was softened or terrified even to tears. He observed it, but observed it only with scorn. “You may abate your consternation,” said he; “you mean by that word, something, that the nurse and the priest have taught; I mean only something that my sufferings in this world have taught me, and which I shall probably forget as soon as I quit it. I have long been assured there was no other heaven than a quiet rest after a good

dinner; and no other hell than the privation of enjoyment, without the privation of desire." I was now shocked to a degree that impelled me to change the subject; and I spoke eagerly of my uncle and of the neighbourhood, of which however I knew nothing. "I wanted to talk to you of your uncle," said he, "and you compelled me to speak of my own feelings.

"Your uncle is my elder brother, though not of the same name; for I changed mine for the property of a maternal uncle which I inherit. Your uncle is a Milesian, and like all Milesians, proud and dull; but unlike most Milesians, amazingly rich.

"He has no children, he is old, much older than I am. He has a nephew who resides with him; but he is our sister's son, and thanks to your uncle's Milesian prejudice in favor of male descent, he will probably prefer you, as his bro-

ther's child, to any other competitor for his favor. Observe me, Ormsby; were you independent, I would consider him and his favor as an object for you to quiz and ridicule; but you have nothing. Let not the appearance I make deceive you. I have sunk the whole of my property for an annuity; the house in which I live will, and every inch of ground about it, be alienated at my death. My age—not my age, I mean, but my infirmities, require much indulgence; I considered that, and considered I had the best right to indulgence from myself. I can hardly afford myself Burgundy as it is; this cursed war with France has deranged the whole business of life. I could drink Champagne ten years ago for the price I give for vin de grave now. You see therefore it is necessary I should make some sacrifice. Expect nothing from me; but if you manage well, expect every thing from your uncle.”

I was trying to comprehend his meaning; I was trying to conceive that a parent could nurse a child in luxury, whom he meant to expose to indigence, when a tumult of voices, in which Sybilla's was predominant, recalled us to the dining-room, whose windows descending to the ground, communicated with the garden. Sybilla was contending with Miss Percival with a vehemence of which I hardly thought her capable. "This is a species of oppression to which I will not submit, madam," said she; "I insist upon having at least an hour to myself in the evening, and that hour I will devote to the study of the Scriptures. At the school where I have lived happily many years, it was the habit of my life; it has now, from an habit, become a duty; but neither as an habit nor duty shall it be suspended. You may deride me; but insensibility to unjust censure, is one of the first les-

sons of that book you would take from me."—"If you had been satisfied with calling the study of that work an habit, and reasoned for its propriety from the force of habit merely, I could not oppose you. We all admit the force of habit. One of our first and greatest writers* maintains, that habit may hold so strong an influence over an old woman living with a band of robbers, and accustomed to their atrocities, that any attempt to shake her conviction of the rectitude of her mode of life, would be as ineffectual as to eradicate the belief of revelation from a mind hardened in its belief by age and habit. He intimates, indeed, that the errors of both are equally absurd; and the habits of mind in both merely mechanical."

"Nor will I," said Sybilla, more intent on her own vexations, than Miss

* Vide, "Caleb Williams," Character of Judith.

P.'s reasoning; "nor will I," said she, pushing away her drawing desk, "be made to study those odious nude figures you bring me; nakedness is what I never wished to contemplate in my own person, or any one else's." "You show a most alarming impurity of mind," said Miss P——; "our shame of nakedness is merely a shame of our own ideas; drapery is only an apology for that want of modesty, which the mind in its present state, while clothes are permitted, must ever want; were the soul in a pure and perfect state of abstraction, it would be utterly unconscious, not only of nakedness, but of the existence of a body at all.—The more we approach to this state, the further we remove from shame: read the writings of the modern philosophers, and you will be convinced they have very little either of shame or fear." "If you will permit her," said my father, who never lost an opportunity of sneer-

ing at the Bible, "to study that old Jewish Fabulist she is so fond of, she will be reconciled by the discovery her first parents were naked and not ashamed." "God bless me," said Sybilla in serious distress—she collected herself and addressed my father almost with dignity. "Believe me, sir, if you respect your own authority, you will not weaken its only permanent support. The books that Miss P. and you sanction, are such as would justify me in rejecting a controul from which I derive little beside pain, were I not withheld by the authority of that book, which allowing no compromise for disobedience, commands children to obey their parents in all things, which draws no sanction from the mutable motives of the human will; but tells us, it is good and acceptable in the eyes of the Lord." My father rung for his drops—I had been silent, but I could be so no longer.

I took Sybilla's hand—"If you, sir, can see this with indifference, I cannot; I have been taught to respect modesty, and to reverence religion. Pardon me if I say, I see little temptation to relinquish my opinions, from the examples of those who oppose them; I claim impunity for my sister and myself while we live with you. The alternative would be much easier to me than to hear the Being whom I worship—defied; and the sex whom I honor, and the only being of that sex whom I love, insulted or contaminated."

In the flush of speaking, I drew Sybilla from the room—we found ourselves in the garden before we knew we had quitted it. This burst of passion must be forgiven me. I was eminently ignorant of life, and of the mode of palliating the passions of others or my own. I had passed successively from an house of solitude and privacy, to a cottage in the wilds of Cumberland, thence to a retired family

in Dublin; the influence of whose habits had been increased by the austerities of recent fanaticism, for such in a measure was the religious system I had acquired in Dublin. From thence I had been hastily removed to the country, and in every place through which I had passed, I had been approached with a kind of distant reserve, and invested with a species of solitary grandeur, that exalted my pride, and inflamed my romantic singularity of mind almost to wildness. I was as impatient of contradiction, as one who had heard little but submission, and as jealous of my innocence and purity, as one who knew vice only by its report.

I consoled Sybilla as well as I could, and confirmed her in her resistance of corruption; we had no very distinct ideas of what we were to contend for, but we determined to contend as for existence and all its work; we resolved on regular hours of religious study, and condoled with

and commended each other.—It was now night, and we returned to the house like criminals, though conscious of integrity. My father and Miss P. had retired—as we past through the hall, a servant in a gorgeous and clumsy livery bowed very low to me, and wished me “a thousand years of life.” His tone struck me; I enquired who he was—he was a servant of my uncle’s, who came from the Castle (about five miles distant) with an invitation to a family dinner on the following day. I understood this was occasioned by the intelligence of my arrival. I was anxious to see the old Irish Chieftain, and to be acquainted with modes of life which appear to the inmates of England like the visions of romance. I was overjoyed to hear on the following morning that the invitation was accepted, and the more so, as it indicated that my father had forgot the sally of the night before, of which I had indeed repented

while uttering it. Miss P., however, was too philosophic, to retain the memory of what had passed the night before, and my father was soothed into good-humour by a night of tranquillity. My uncle and his castle deserve a chapter to themselves.

CHAPTER V.

IN the morning Capt. Deloraine (the other nephew of whom my father spoke) came from the Castle to wait on me before my appearance there ; this attention from a man so much my senior, for D. was seven or eight and twenty, flattered my boyish vanity. It was not without some degree of confusion, I met a man whom I had been instructed to supplant ; but the sight of Deloraine was enough to banish all confusion. There was a bold and chearful openness, a candour both natural and professional about him, which won all eyes and minds that encountered. His person and air were military, his face was that of a man, who thought more than D. seemed to think ; but I re-

signed my pretensions to physiognomy, sooner than admit any defect in the character I had imagined of him. My father set out for the Castle in the chariot, accompanied by Sybilla; Deloraine and I rode; Miss P. declined going. I was delighted with my companion; his information was trivial, but he communicated it with a vivacity that enchanted a boy.

“These great houses you see to the left,” said he, “have every reason to look desolate, they are the property of absentees. Lord Westhampton and Lord Roschamp draw large revenues from their Irish estates, which the former never visits, and the latter only to rack his overracked tenants to their uttermost farthing. He is a famous fellow however, and gives amazing good dinners, and keeps the whole country in an uproar while he stays. My uncle does not visit him, as he has unluckily discovered that his lordship’s great uncle was mar-

ried to his grandfather's foster-sister.— He says, English peers have no business to intrude into the families of Irish Chieftains. Farther to the left, you may see Hammond's-grove; if that Hammond did not keep his mistress and her brood in the house, and make every one that dines with him drink so infernally, it would be a capital lounge in this desolate place. He has a legitimate son, a fine fellow, only devilish squeamish; whom he, or his habits, have driven from the house."

I was caught by the name, and eagerly inquired particulars of young Hammond; it was the friend of my childhood. I cherished the thought that we should yet take sweet counsel together, and confirm ourselves in mutual rectitude.

We now passed a building so dreary, that it hardly seemed the habitation of man. "That," said Deloraine, "is the haunted house; every rustic neighbour-

hood has its spectres, living or dead: perhaps, if you could see the inmate of that mansion, you would hardly know which to pronounce him. He is a man who lives alone, some say, in consequence of his crimes; some say, in consequence of his misfortunes: as for me, I know so little of solitude, it is impossible for me to pronounce what could determine any man to chuse it. I believe I have bored you enough in my office of *Diable Boiteux*; but we are now within sight of the castle, and I cannot lay it down without one caution. Your uncle has all the peculiarities of a Milesian, and one that no Milesian but himself ever had. He cannot bear assent. To be 'obligingly flat,' is to disoblige him for ever. He loves to hear English manners and modern habits defended, that he may have the pleasure of refuting them. He is only to be pleased by contradiction; but, remember, if you assign me as the au-

thority for your knowledge of his character, I am blown for ever; for he loves to have it discovered after repeated mistakes and disappointments, which I have interrupted to spare time, and you—*au revoir.*”

I was profuse in my thanks; but on the scene I was approaching, I wished my whole attention to be fixed—the castle of an Irish Chieftain and his family. I had seen nothing yet of the peculiar and national features of the Irish, I soon discovered the reason. The Irish are easily repelled by strangers. About my father's house, the fame of whose French household had travelled round the country, not an Irish face was to be seen; every thing about the Chieftain's castle bore the aspect I looked for. The people were as sallow, and meagre, and ill-clad, as any where else; but there was an expression of animated cordiality, a warmth of heart that illuminated the face of the

meanest of them, that indicated the influence of the presence of a chief who loved them, and whom they loved. The castle, a bold rude mass of structure, whose strength was more than proportioned to its size, stood on an island spot of cultivated ground, surrounded by bogs; a bare-footed boy ran before us to open the gate, which admitted us into an inclosure, where a number of sheep feeding, strongly contrasted the rude and warlike range of walls that surrounded the castle. The principal gate here had been out of repair for some years; the chief, however, was satisfied, by seeing workmen prepare to go to it every Monday morning; in the mean time a car was placed across, to facilitate the progress of foot-passengers, over the masses of stone that lay scattered around it; and we were obliged to dismount, and lead our horses through a yard which communicated with the kitchens, and which

was filled by an army of followers feeding in idleness and plenty.

We ascended the great stairs ; at the upper-end of a dark, spacious, ill-furnished room, the Chieftain was seated in an huge chair of wicker, from which no man who wished for a picture of antiquity would have bid him rise ; my father, who was there already, introduced me. " You are welcome," said he, and his voice made me feel I was. I never beheld hoary grandeur more awful ; I feel some reluctance in attempting to describe this noble old ruin : the Irish character has been much exaggerated.

They who speak of a Milesian chief, describe him a being, obsolete as Brien Boirn, or Fingal ; as a being, who talks the language of Ossian, and wears the robes of a bard. I cannot overstep the modesty of nature in my description, for I have seen and known the man whom I describe. He was a man, whose

strong and characteristic peculiarities were partly softened by age, and partly shaded by the influence of the manners of the day; an influence which he would never acknowledge.

He was seventy-six years of age, but he was as upright as the towers of his own castle, and his intellects were as vigorous as his frame; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated; his hair, which flowed loose and wild, was as white as snow; his dress was the English habit of fifty years ago; but he always wore a cloak of the brightest scarlet, whose folds he grasped and waved, when he spoke with animation. His demeanour was marked with dignity, but it was a wild and original dignity; that of a chief of a warlike country, lofty with unborrowed grandeur and habitual command; amid the polished forms of modern life, he looked the oak, amid the poplar and the willow.

At dinner, my admiration was withdrawn from his person to his conversation. It appeared, he had passed much of his youth abroad ; he spoke French, Italian, Spanish ; he was acquainted with their literature and their politics ; he spoke of them with toleration, but of Ireland with enthusiasm. Such a man gives to a listener the same pleasure, that a traveller would receive from visiting a building, whose sombrous antiquity promised nothing but gloom and decay ; but who, on entering it, would find all splendid with illumination, and luxurious with elegance ; yet, all modulated by the gracious melancholy, and tinged with the hoary complexion of the original structure. Without a wish to excite him by opposition, when the dessert appeared, I could not avoid wondering, that a man who had drank of the rich fruitage of France, could accustom himself to the cold productions of his own climate.

“Young man,” said he, “when my appetites were more keen, I would have exchanged all the grapes of France, and the almonds of Spain, for a single apple from the garden of my father’s *house.” The dinner, though as good as my father could wish, was marked by circumstances sufficiently characteristic. When the turf-basket, which always stands on the hearth, required to be filled, a barefooted boy came into the room, who did not appear from his embarrassment, “to have never before stood in such a presence.”

The whole of dinner-time, the Chieftain was accosted by persons who entered and departed abruptly; and who by their action (for the conversation was in Irish) appeared to speak of business, and whom he answered, as if the interruption was a common one; almost as soon as dinner was over, the Chieftain

* Taken from life.

beckoned to his confessor, a venerable and decent priest, whose pale face was tinged with something more than religious melancholy, and they withdrew together, evidently for the purposes of devotion, the Chieftain making a slight apology for his absence, at which my father was not angry, as Deloraine was appointed to supply his place, and my father loved to be pressed to drink. As my uncle and the priest quitted the room, I thought they appeared to pause before the picture of a young and beautiful female, which was over the chimney-piece ; I thought I saw my uncle's eye glisten with something more than grief—the priest crossed himself, and his lips moved—neither of them spoke a word ; when they were gone, I learnt a great part of the Chieftain's history from my father's sneers, and Deloraine's comments.

He was a son of a younger branch of

the old Milesian family of De Lacy; his father was indigent, and his prospect of succession was as remote as an host of intermediate heirs could make it; under these circumstances he determined to enter into foreign service—it was the custom of the day. During his preparations for this step, his maternal uncle, a man of large property, old and childless, offered him his estate on condition of his assuming the name of Bethel; the Milesian rejected the wealth and the condition with contempt; the offer was successively made to his three younger brothers, all but the youngest (my father) rejected it. The Chieftain went abroad with his brothers, to earn wealth and distinction by their swords; my father plunged into sudden affluence became the most luxurious and dissipated man of the age. The brothers met abroad, but the De Lacys would not own their relationship, and my father's pleasures were such as did not require

the auxiliaries of domestic affection. When my uncle had seen his brothers perish in the service, in which he had wasted his youth and his blood without reward, he began to think that poverty would be more tolerable in a country he loved, than abroad. He determined to spend the remainder of his life under the shadow of the walls of his kindred's castle, which he was always accustomed to call, the house of his fathers.

Perhaps his resolution received force from a cause of all others most likely to give force to habits of strenuous melancholy. He was said to be desperately attached to a French lady of distinguished rank and beauty, who loved him, and had owned her love, but felt his poverty was an hopeless obstruction to their happiness. He found consolation in the society of a young benedictine, an Irishman, whose superior was confessor in the lady's family; this young man avowed to the

Chieftain his passion for his mistress, with the simplicity, and the despair of religion. It was a sad and strange confidence ; they loved to talk of unattainable happiness, and mutual misery excluded jealousy ; this was interrupted by De Lacy's returning to Ireland, to poverty, and celibacy, and solitude. He had scarcely arrived, when he received intelligence that he had succeeded to the title of Chieftain, and the property of his family, by the unexpected death of the late possessor, who had no legitimate children. Burning to visit the house of his fathers, now his own, the Chieftain however immediately embarked for France, and proceeded to claim the hand of the lady, whom he might now invite to a participation of wealth equal to her own. He arrived in hope and fear, such as the excess of love sometimes causes ; he came to hear that the lady had retired to a convent, and shed her last tears on disappointed love a few

days before his arrival. I know not whether this misery was mitigated, or heightened, by the approaching dissolution of the nun : with sensibility uncommon in a French-woman, she sunk under her love and grief; she admitted her despairing lover to the grate, spoke as calmly as she could of resignation, and hopes that pointed to happiness, more pure and permanent, and when he tore himself from her sight, retired to die.

I heard nothing of the Chieftain's despair ; by all accounts it was not very clamorous : he procured the lady's picture, procured the liberation of the young benedictine (whom he appointed his confessor) from his convent, and returned to Ireland, where he resided in gloomy indolence and solitary grandeur. The improvements which in an happier frame, he had purposed to make in his own modes of life, and in those of his tenantry and dependants, were forgotten or de-

ferred till they were forgotten. He was said sometimes to sooth his grief by speaking to his confessor of the object of their disastrous love, but this could only be conjectured, for her name was never heard to pass his lips.

He was often reproached with neglecting the great advantages by which he was distinguished, and perhaps he sometimes reproached himself for it; but we are accustomed to contrive some palliation for habitual failings, and the Chieftain compounded between the shame of his indolence and his respect for the habits of his ancestors. Whatever was noticed in the circumstances around him as defective, or requiring alteration, his frequent answer was, "It is the custom of my fathers."

I extorted this narrative by repeated questions; those who informed me wondered at the emotion I expressed. I know not whether those who read it will feel with me or them.

As it was concluded, the Chieftain and his confessor returned. Their faces had a glow such as human benevolence or pleasure never yet gave: the Chief's step was firmer, and his voice, without being elevated, had a rich and solemn depth of sound, as if he had just descended from high conference. He had been in prayer; the prayer of a broken and contrite heart, and a portion of its soft and solemn spirit rested on him still. I looked on this distinguished old man with increased love and awe every moment; I could not for my soul practise Deloraine's plan of contradiction.

There was enough without any effort from me: my father, provoked at being summoned to coffee too soon, peevishly dwelt on every subject of provocation. He talked of the dilapidated state of the castle. "It will last long enough to shelter the last of the De Lacys," said the Chieftain; "it may crumble over my

grave without injuring me." My father spoke of the neglected appearance of the grounds about the castle, and the impolicy of indulging the tenants among whom he lived with such low rents; "a practice," said he, "of which the mischief is obvious; for those who have little to pay, find the temptation to indolence so strong, that they neglect their farms and their landlords equally, while your tenants in the south, who hold much worse ground at an higher rent, pay that rent punctually, because they are excited to diligence by the pressure." "Let my successor raise his rents," said the Chieftain. "I will not change the customs of my fathers." My father would not be evaded; he renewed a subject of perpetual hostility, the modernness of Irish structures, the general want of marks of antiquity in the nation, and all its features. My uncle was roused, he rose, and grasping his mantle, burst forth into a flood of

declamation that silenced the "puny battle," of his assailant in a moment. It was full of strong and peculiar phrases, many of them harsh to an English ear, and foreign to the idiom of the language; he was evidently thinking in Irish, though he spoke in English. He concluded by saying, "Is it for those who have desolated the country, and razed every mark of power or of resistance from the face of it, to demand where is the proof of power, or of resistance, and after beating down with the savageness of conquerors, the monuments of our strength and greatness, to ask with the insolence of conquerors, what monuments of strength and greatness are left to us?"

"How is it then," said my father, when he recovered his breath, "that the Romans can still shew monuments of former greatness, surviving amid a country that was desolated by Goths." "Because the monuments of recent

greatness are more easily preserved than those of remote ; the structures of Irish greatness were perhaps falling into ruins before those of Roman were erected. The great enemy to the existence of our ancient monuments was Christianity; St. Patrick and his followers demolished the heathen temples, and——but I beg your pardon Lionel (for he never would call him Bethel) I speak only to Irishmen. I desire to make no converts. I cannot argue with English minds. But he who shakes my belief in the antiquity of my country, must first shake my belief in the beatitude of the immaculate Virgin Mary." We returned home, and two barefooted boys ran beside the carriage to prevent the coachman driving us into the dykes of the deep bog-road ; for my uncle, though strictly temperate himself, laid no restraint on his household, in the savage custom of intoxicating the servants of their visitors.

My father read an extraordinary paragraph from an English morning paper, the following day :

“ The distinguished family, who have so long possessed the title and estates of Westhampton, (in consequence of a late remarkable investigation, before the House of Lords) are about to resign them to the legitimate possessor, who has for many years struggled in oppression and obscurity.

“ The noble family, on this diminution of their property and their honors, are about to retire to Ireland, in which country they have still a large estate. We are authorized to contradict in the most positive manner, that the lady of the noble lord in question has accepted any overtures to an arrangement from any party, of which the event would be to fix her residence in London. On the contrary she has announced her intention of accompanying her lord to Ireland.

We condole with the fashionable world, on the total eclipse of its most brilliant luminary," &c. &c. There was a vast deal more which my father in his joy had not patience to read.

"Thank heaven," said he, "I shall have some society in this savage place. Lord Westhampton, or whatever he is now, gives the best dinners in the world. I knew him and Lady W. intimately abroad. They are the most charming people in the world. But they are cursedly mistaken if they imagine Lady W. will bury herself in Ireland, unless she has lost her beauty, and then she could not do a better thing, except shooting herself. But she is too exquisite a mistress of the art of beauty to lose it by age. She was the finest creature I ever beheld, two and twenty years ago, when we met at Naples. The design was English, but the colouring and manner, and finish, perfectly foreign.

“The worst of Lady W. was an incessant and unmitigated blaze of attractions that gave no mercy or respite. She was for ever on the full stretch, and kept all her listeners and beholders so. She would beat every one on their own ground. In Paris she was the first coquet; in Italy the first cognoscenti; in London the first politician in the female world. She was always in opposition, and gave a devilish deal of trouble to the ministry, till she succeeded in marrying one of her daughters to the premier Lord Castle Wycomb, and then she was satisfied. But with all her wit and beauty and grandeur, (and I am told they are improving every year since I knew her) she always appeared to me to be unhappy. There was always a kind of force and feverish irritation in her display of talents and attractions. Her manners had always something glaring and artificial like her rouge and fard. What the devil could make her unhappy,

I never could imagine, for she had more vanity and admiration, than three-fourths of her sex beside."

The character struck me, carelessly and coarsely as it was sketched; there was something in it, at which my imagination kindled. "Perhaps," said I, "she might have desired something more than the pleasures of vanity and admiration; perhaps she was not happy in her family."

"I imagine," said he, "she was as happy as a woman of rank could expect. She had an immense family, about whom she managed so well, that the sons are all in very brilliant lines, and the daughters got off so young, that there could be no competition between them. None of them, that I heard of, indeed could contend with her; they were mere fashionable expletives; but she continued to find places for them famously. As to Lord W. he never could have given her the least disturbance. I don't think I

ever saw them together for three years I was abroad with them. If they travel to the family mansion in the family coach, it will probably be the first hour they have passed together since their marriage."

I was looking over the paragraphs while he was speaking; they occupied a whole column with conjectures, whether the furniture was to be sold or removed to Ireland, and whether the lady's diamonds were to pay the family debts, or the gaming debts; and whether the jointure was to be given up, or the eldest son's splendid allowance diminished: and whether his lordship's magnificent set of plate, with the herald's coat and family crest and supporters, and foliage, &c. &c. was to be sent back to the jewellers; or her ladyship's last new barouche, elegantly finished, in the first style, by the first artist—the painting and varnish by —, the mouldings by —; the

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border picked in with the livery colours, and the harness embellished after a new Parisian pattern, was to be sent to the coach-makers in place of his bill, &c. &c. &c. All this, with a thousand comments and conjectures, and regrets and flourishes, and hints at the iniquitous share Lord W. had taken in a late transaction, and compassion for the lady whom the public voice universally acquitted ; all this proved, that few subjects had so much occupied the fashionable world, nay, even the public feelings and curiosity, as this extraordinary affair. I observed to my father, that the papers were sufficiently liberal of their censures on Lord W. for his usurpation of the honors that had been wrested from him. They appeared to hint too, that his treatment of the person whom he has contrived to exclude from his possessions so long, had been eminently cruel and treacherous. He was silent.

I ventured to add, that the society of a man of such principles could hardly be regarded as an acquisition. "Principles," said my father, "what the devil have I to do with the principles of a man who gives such dinners as Lord W.? I wish half the nobility had such principles—of taste—But what day is this?" said he, looking at the date of his papers. "Morbleu, Sunday—Masseau, give me double my dose of laudanum. Miss Percival, I shall take it a favor if you will read to me to-day." Miss P., animated by the hope of conversion, began with "Godwin's Political Justice," and in a few minutes was accompanied by the loud snoring of her catechumen, on whom her reading had produced its full effect.

I stole out of the room to inquire for a place of worship in the neighbourhood. I was directed to a Romish chapel. I asked was there no

church—the church was in ruins; but one of the servants said he believed that service was performed in the hall of Lord Roschamp's house, during his lordship's absence, as the housekeeper happened to be a Protestant. I rode there. Deloraine had shewed me the direction in which the house lay. A servant followed me with a request from my father, (who had awoke) to bring home to dinner any one I could meet with.

I have no desire to represent myself as—"righteous over much;" and a youth of sixteen, going on a pilgrimage in quest of a church, may savour too much of spiritual errantry. But I had a strong sense of religion. My belief in revelation was firm, it has always been firm; and revelation points out the necessity of combining habits with feeling; and the expediency of public and prescriptive exercises of devotion too strongly to be mistaken, except by those who wish to mistake it.

I will not deny that the force of these feelings was increased by the force of opposition; and that my piety was never so prompt, when it was the habit of the family with whom I lived to frequent church three times a day.

At a little distance from Roschamp-House, I saw a young man riding eagerly in the same direction; it was Hammond, the friend of my childhood, the man whom, even in childhood, I had fixed on as the friend of mature life. Our joy at meeting was equal; it was not diminished by the occasion of it. We were both going to the same place. We were the only members of our families who went there. Hammond was altered in nothing but his appearance. He was the same steady, sedate character, of inflexible mind, and strenuous virtue. His character was so exactly the reverse of my own, that he was the very man of ten thousand who should

have been my friend. He went to church early, that he might request the clergyman to attend a sick servant at Hammond's-Grove. "She is surrounded," said he, "by Catholics, who are tormenting her to send for a priest; and if I did not execute this commission myself, I know no one in the house to whom it could be entrusted."

We entered the hall, which was filled with all the Protestant population in the neighbourhood, about forty persons. I knew how service was usually performed in country churches; the rector of the parish was absent, and I expected from the curate, what may be expected from a man who amid obscurity and indigence has sullied and lost whatever he possessed in early life of the habits of a gentleman and a scholar. The service was performed by a man who gave me new ideas of religion and its ministers for ever. Let me indulge in speaking a few words

of this man, whose agency in my narrative may justify the digression.

His name was Corbett. He had been a curate six and forty years. He sought not to be any thing else. The religion he possessed had taught him, "having food and raiment, to be therewith content;" and the same influence extending to his habits, had enabled him by temperance and prudence, to obtain all he thought necessary in life. He was married, and had a son whom he himself had educated; and who, like himself, was in the ministry. When I speak of the effects of his mode of prayers and preaching, I speak of the effects I witnessed in the course of a constant attendance on him. He never read prayers; he prayed, and with such deep and fervent feeling, with emphasis so obviously suggested, not by the art, but by the nature of supplication; with pauses so strongly marked by solemnity of recollection, and a suspension of the act, without a suspension

of the feeling, that his congregation almost unconsciously joined in the responses, which were originally intended for their utterance, and felt the force of habit and of indolence yield to the holy energy with which he poured out his petitions.

I never heard man preach as he did. He was a scholar, to whom few I have ever met were superior. He was a man delighting in conversation, in which, if light, he could amuse, and if argumentative, he could instruct, more than any man I ever listened to. But in the pulpit, he laid aside the wisdom of words, and the weapons of fleshly warfare altogether. That he was a scholar you felt not; you felt not that he was a man of rich imagination, or of strong reasoning powers; you felt not that he or his discourse could be referred to any class of mind or composition that could assist you to judge of them in a temporal sense. But you felt irresistibly that he

was a believer, pleading with the power of conviction; that he was a religionist, speaking from experience, commending a life he lived, and a felicity he felt; that he spoke and acted on principles which, though beyond the range of existence, were not beyond the range of reality; principles, which he made present and vivid, and substantial alike by the force of eloquence, and the force of example. He was a speaker, who, of all others I ever heard, succeeded most in averting your attention from himself to his subject. It was long after his sermons had concluded, that you could think of the preacher, like the priest in the Jewish hierarchy—he disappeared in the cloud of incense himself sent up.

The Christianity he preached, was such as a man would preach, who, abstracted from the influence of prejudice and habit and self-wisdom, had sought his system in revelation alone, and found and

formed it there. It was neither a frame of doctrinal niceties, curiously constructed, and totally unfit for use; nor a formulary of habitual observances, at which the constant attendance of the body may excuse the absence of the mind. It was a system, of which the principles were operative, in which opinion held its due relation to practice; Christianity was described as a dispensation exhibiting certain facts to the belief; and the belief, if subdued by these facts, suggesting the most important and active consequences to our minds and our lives. It may be thought there was something in this mode of representation too argumentative and consequential for the comprehension of a rustic audience—it was not so. Though his positions were strong and important, they were clothed in a language, whose peculiar and providential felicity is, that it is the universal language, the first language that religion

talks to the ear of infancy, the language that genius reverences, and ignorance understands, the language of the poet and of the saint, the language of divinity and of the heart, the language of the Scriptures.

He spoke as a father pleading with a wayward child; he spoke as a judge with a criminal, to confess and be forgiven; as a guide with a wanderer, to return and to rest.

When he finished his sermon, it was not with Cowper's "well-bred whisper." He appeared for some time engaged in prayer; an effusion of mind so solemn and deep, that most of the audience involuntarily joined in it; those who did not, were awed and silent. When he came down, and walked among us, though the thunder of his eloquence was hushed, his countenance spoke still. He had descended from the mount; but his visage retained the brightness of that high

place. If I write of this man, I shall write volumes. When I could approach him, I introduced myself to him, solicited his acquaintance, and praised his discourse in those broken and tremulous sentences, which are all that wonder and reverence leave us breath for.

He put by my praises with a courteous humility, that declined the common traffic of commendation for vanity. I know not whether it will not sound like an interruption of this "celestial colloquy," that Mr. Corbett promised to dine at Lemon-Grove, and that I compelled him to accept my horse, as he acknowledged the distance was remote for a man of his age on foot.

I walked slowly homewards, and tried to believe it was to revolve Mr. Corbett's sermon; but every thought presented Lady Montrevor—her situation so romantic, her beauty so resplendent, buried in a wild country, and

so near me. I calculated the very way her carriage would come, and gazed as if I expected to see it there. That she would come I was determined to believe, in spite of my father's sneers; for, her beauty and her errors, her splendour and her melancholy, the mixed and cloudy brightness of her character was but too delightful to an imagination like mine. I was delighted at meeting almost every moment cars and waggons, and every implement for carrying furniture, and a train of splashed and weary servants cursing the bog-roads in French and English; all indications of the progress of the great family, on the road to Montrevor-House. I loitered looking at them till it was late, and the heavy clouds of evening were deepened by a storm. I looked about me, I had mistaken the road; I saw no one near to direct me, but a dark figure that was moving rapidly at a distance. I hastened to him;

his appearance made me almost repent my haste. He was wrapt in a dark cloak ; he had a cap on his head of a strong and ancient fashion ; his face was as pale as that of a corse, and two dark eyes, which though fixed on me, did not seem to see me, gave an expression to his face, that was almost supernatural. I addressed him in English, and inquired my way to Lemon-Grove. He was silent. I repeated my question in French, for there was something foreign in his air. He pointed to the left, and hastily pursued another direction. Before I had proceeded far, the violence of the rain made me look round for shelter.

I saw nothing near me but the building which Deloraine had pointed out to me, as the haunted house ; it was a single solitary tower at the extremity of a bridge I was crossing. With some difficulty I obtained admission, for the inhabitant was an old woman who only spoke

Irish; its appearance within was as melancholy as without; it seemed to have been uninhabited for many years, and then imperfectly repaired for the admission of the inhabitant. As I looked about me, not without some mixture of uneasiness, I saw the dark figure approaching, he entered. He started on seeing me, but did not speak, and darting up a winding flight of stone steps in an angle of the tower disappeared. I conceived at once this was the person whom Deloraine had described—the strange inhabitant of this strange mansion. The old woman went out for some turf to replenish the wretched fire. I was not easy in my situation, yet I was unwilling to go, for my curiosity was strongly excited.

The feeling was not unmingled with fear, as a strange sound, low, but distinct, issued from the direction in which the stranger had disappeared. I listened intently; it was a groan, deep and pro-

longed, it was scarce louder than respiration, it was no clamour of common grief, it was the inward cry of a wounded spirit. My breath grew short as I listened, it continued without intermission, but while I still wondered, my wonder was changed into horror: my hands and neck were stained with drops of blood, fresh and warm, that fell slowly on them through the broken roof. I could remain no longer, I rushed out. There was no attempt made to detain me.

When I reached my father's, the sight of a large and cheerful circle (for when my father wished to excite cheerfulness, none could resist him) almost banished the visionary complexion of my thoughts: but I mentioned the circumstances that had detained me. Mr. Corbett said that he believed the person I had met to be indeed a mysterious character, but it was a mystery which had nothing to alarm, it

only referred to himself; he was of the Catholic persuasion, he lived in utter solitude, he knew no one, and no one even knew his name: but he was eminently charitable, and in their mutual visits to the poor, they had often met, but never exchanged a syllable. Of a man whose habits were so exemplary, he would not willingly believe the guilt, but he believed him to have been unfortunate, perhaps to the partial derangement of his reason. I had almost trembled for the reception Mr. C. might meet at Lemon-grove, but I found my father disarmed by the simplicity of his manners, that neither sought to declaim nor to dictate, and amused by the variety and intelligence of his conversation. Hammond too appeared more than amused by Sybilla, and I was suffered to think of Lady M. without interruption.

In the morning there came an old gardener from Montrevor House in despair. When he could understand the directions

given by the new servants who were coming down in scores, for arranging the furniture, &c. &c. &c. he found that the hall and staircase, and gallery, were to be filled with flowers, "which the Blessed Virgin help me," said the old man, "I thought were to grow in gardens; so I had packed them all with flowers as tight as a kish of turf, and the whole house looked as green as the top of my cabbin, when behold you, an unlucky gossoon of a boy knocked a great orange tree, that stood up by the great staircase window, as tall and as straight as your young master, and murdered it all to pieces, and murdered me too, for as my soul shall go to glory, I have not the fellow of it in the world, and there is the companion of it standing upon the other side as serious and as dismal as any Christian creature you ever saw in your life that had lost its friend and its gossip, and I moaning over them both, till I am almost killed." My

father, who heard his moaning, determined to send one of his finest orange trees immediately to Montrevor House, and desired that the family should be acquainted on their arrival with the name of the donor, as he wished to renew his acquaintance with them under friendly auspices. The orangetree, in full produce, placed in a superb tub, was accordingly committed to the care of a servant, who *en suite* committed it to a carman to convey to Montrevor House. In a couple of hours the driver returned with visible marks of distress and contusions. The abridgment of his adventure was, that about a mile from Montrevor House, he had been overtaken by two persons on horseback, whom from their dress he conceived to be grooms, but who turned out to be gentlemen from the bets they made, and the oaths they swore. As they came up with him on a full canter, "Damme, Jack," said the first, "I'll

engage I'll nick the top orange of that tree with my whip as I pass it, without pulling in." "Done, damme, that you wo'nt for five guineas." The foremost then rode up, but only nicked the leaves. He then offered to double the bet, and do it if the car was stationary; this was accepted, and the carman ordered to stop. He refused, a scuffle followed, till at length the gentleman, provoked at the fellow's mistaking him for a servant of Lord Montrevor's, and threatening to tell his master of him, offered to box the rascal, for the car and orange tree and all. The man, confident of his strength, readily agreed, and a very spirited set-to took place in the road, in which the carman had a decided advantage, till unluckily seeing his horse, who was tired of the fray, turning back with his load to Lemon-grove, and quitting the engagement to overtake him, he was judged by the gentlemen to have broken the rules, and for-

feited the prize, which they compelled him to lead to Roschamp House in triumph, where he learnt with some confusion that his assailants were Lord Roschamp, and a sporting companion of his, Sir John Orberry, who were come down to keep up a dust for about a week, among the savages of the west.

My father was outrageous at this insult, of which the levity did not at all atone for the impertinence. I immediately sprung on horseback, and desiring a man to follow me to Roschamp House, with a car, I hurried there with resentment, little inferior to his. I was there in a few minutes, I inquired for Lord Roschamp, he was abroad. I hesitated a moment about the propriety of entering an house, in the absence of the master, till recollecting that he could easily find me at home, if he wished, I walked deliberately into the hall, and desiring the man who was with me to take the orange tree, and

replace it on his car, I waited till I saw him perform my directions without disturbance. As I was going out a slight figure in a riding dress entered the hall; his appearance was mean and diminutive. The man hesitated, I desired him to proceed, "Where are you going with that, my fine fellow?" said the figure. "I am going to my master's, or wherever my master pleases to bid me," said the man, emboldened by his master's presence. "Very fine, damme, very famous upon my soul," said the baronet walking off. "That is Sir John," said the man. He showed no wish to speak to or detain me, and as I did not desire to assume the appearance of braving a man gratuitously, I walked out as deliberately as I had entered, and escorted the orange tree back to my fathers, for it was now too late to send it to its first destination.

We were to dine that day at Hammond's, for my father had drowned his horrors of

Irish neighbourhood in their claret: but the day that he passed at Hammond's, he did not recover for a week; it was a castle-rack-rent, an house of disorder and riot, where a bad dinner, vilely dressed, and attended by careless servants, was washed down by floods of wine, that were swallowed with the precipitation of men who were in haste to forget themselves. His mistress sat at the table,* some of his illegitimate children by his servants attended at it; the company were some vulgar and worthless wretches, who were permitted to live there to excite laughter, and to swallow wine. The conversation was such as not even young Hammond could give a colouring of decency to, and the jests such as buffoons, or schoolboys, would substitute for wit. When my father drew out his handkerchief, he found a lighted turf had been introduced into his pocket, and when he burst away from his

* Taken from real life.

tormentors, he was presented with his pelisse in the lining of which a live mouse was inserted, and an hat on which a dog had enjoyed very good repose and digestion. I was seriously incensed at this buffoonery practised on a man delicate from habit, and irritable from ill-health. I made him put on my coat, and heaping those of the servants about him to secure him from cold, I found I had excluded myself from any room in the carriage; I took an horse from one of the servants, and rode beside it.

It was night, and as we approached Montrevor House, a vast number of moving lights, and a tumult of carriages announced the arrival of the family. As we drew nearer, I could distinguish two carriages and a chariot by the lamps before them, and eight outriders. I thought of what one of those carriages might contain, and stopt my horse at a little distance from the gates,

that I could see by torch-light were thrown open for their reception. The two first carriages had entered, and the coachman was manœuvering the four horses to follow with the third, when a sound, that I could compare to nothing human, suddenly arose from the other side of the road, and a number of persons, apparently intoxicated or frantic, surrounded the carriage with cries and gestures of madness. The spirited horses that drew it, reared and plunged with the utmost violence, scattering the crowd in all directions, the coachman was unable to manage them; the people who had terrified them, appeared terrified themselves, the carriage rolling backwards across the road, with its wheels on the very verge of an hill. The screams of females from within were audible: at this moment I sprung from my horse, and grasping the reins of the foremost horse, gave him a lash with my whip across the

neck, that impelled him to make a forcible spring forward, and saved them from their perilous situation. But by this time the confusion was general. One of the outriders who was armed, galloped up, and seeing me hold the reins, presented a pistol at me; I called out to him to hold, but it was too late. I felt the bullet as I thought shatter my arm, I continued to grasp the reins, and call to the coachman that all was safe as long as I was able; but in a moment, from the effusion of blood, and the vehemence of my exertion, my strength failed, I fell and was carried insensible to my father's carriage which had turned back on the tumult.

I was carried home, the wound which was examined by the surgeon of a regiment, quartered in Banagher, was merely a flesh-one; the ball had only grazed my arm, but the loss of blood was great, and my fever was high the next day. But my pain was soothed by the most courtly

messages from Montrevor House, which were brought three times a day, during my confinement; accompanied the first by a note from his lordship full of regret, for my disaster, and praises of my courage, &c. &c. to which the Miss Montolieus, and their gouvernante, who were in the last carriage, probably owed their life, &c. &c.

How the disaster happened, I could not imagine till one of the principal causes of it came to Lemon-grove, to pour out his lamentations over me; it was the old gardener, "and to be sure, honey," said he, "if I had thought it was you that were to be killed in this manner, I would have killed myself with my own hands ten times over first. But as we were all tenants to this great new lord, and old followers to the family, though they never lived among us, why we all loved him as we did our eyes, though we never set them upon his face till last night. So we thought it would be but right to

go out and give him a shout of joy, when he was coming to his own house, that he never was in before ; and we all set out, and we were early enough to see him, for the devil a bit of him was there, and so says I to them, there's no good at all in waiting to see a man in the dark, and we are perished standing here in the bog, with nothing to warm us but the rain and wind ; and so let us step into Paddy Donnellan's, that is within a step of the gate, and take a drop of whiskey, and when we hear the carriage wheel, we'll all come out as fresh as daisies, and give him an Irish cry that he never heard from them English spalpeens in his life ; so we all went to Paddy Donnellan's, and by my soul when we walked out, there was not one of us able to stand, so we all tumbled into the ditch, and began murdering each other, and Paddy fell upon me, and knocked my life out, which was very unkind of you Paddy, says I, when you

know that your aunt was my mother's gossip, and when I took you out of the hands of your two brothers that were after murdering you last St. Michael's day at Banagher-fair. So while we were all scrambling in the ditch for the honor and glory of the Montrevors, up came the carriages, and we all rolled out as bad as we could, and when we all began to shout, hell to the soul of us that could open our mouths, and my lord's servants knocked down some of us, and the rest of us knocked down ourselves, and I ran along by my lord's carriage to the gate, and the coachman killing me all the way with the whip, and I begging pardon, and nobody to hear me, and still I ran on, and got first to the house, to look in my lord and my lady's faces, to see if they were angry; and the first that came out I took for a young officer, for it was all in scarlet, but this was my lady; the servant took her out in his arms, and she looked

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very pale all in the flambeau light, and I told her all about the whiskey and Paddy Donnellan, and begged her ladyship's pardon, and the blessed Virgin's, for it was her night, and then the servants pushed us away; and at last there came out a gentleman whom I took to be my lord, and he gave us a power of money in her ladyship's own sweet name, and then we gave her a shout in earnest, that would have brought her from the other world, if we had murdered her. But may I never die in sin, if when I heard of you, and of that blundering rogue that put a bullet into your arm, if I did not determine to go drown myself in the bog, and never come out of it again till I heard you were alive and well."

The first day I was permitted, I rode to Montrevor-House, to return thanks for their inquiries, and to place the orange-tree, which was brought with me, on the stair-case. I thought I had se-

cured myself against disappointment by not going till two o'clock, but at that hour not one of the family had quitted their apartments, but Lady M.'s femme. On hearing my name, she desired the groom of the chambers to remove the orange-tree to her lady's dressing-room, as her ladyship (who heard of it) desired it might be placed there. I care not who laughs at me, for acknowledging that their notice elated me beyond measure.

A fortnight was now passed in visiting; all the gentry of the neighbourhood crowded the avenues to Montrevor-House with their carriages, as it was universally understood, that Lord M. had retired merely to concert plans for his return at leisure; that one of these was to make himself of consequence, by getting his second son, Col. Montolieu, returned for the county; and for this purpose, he had determined to live in the most splendid hospitality, that he might

ensure a good reception for his son, who was then abroad with an expedition.

The country was full of reports, or rather conjectures, about the family; not one of the females had ever been visible since their arrival, and his lordship had been seen but rarely; but he was pronounced the most charming man in the world: all that a peer, and a courtier, and a senator could be, by those who had had the good fortune to exchange a *bon-jour* with him. I was glad that Lady M. had yet been seen by none; I would not willingly have listened to such a description, as they who talked of her would have given. I should have heard of the pattern of her travelling costume, or the lace of her morning dress: I did not wish the dreams which I indulged of her, to be disturbed by vulgar description. Among other visitors, my father went, and we had the satisfaction of hearing that our equipage and suite

were less laughed at by his lordship's servants, than any that had yet approached his gates. The visit was soon followed by an invitation from Lord M., in which we understand half the country was included. My father, who was a strict observer of etiquette, was at first displeased that the invitation should first come from the stranger, but he pacified himself by reflecting, that his lordship's superior rank justified him in conferring the first compliment, and he resolved to go.

I will not interrupt this narrative with any reflexions on myself; I will not talk of the precipice on which I was treading; I will merely describe what I saw, and leave what I felt to be imagined.

I know not whether the detail of these things be interesting, yet if any one can fill his imagination with the idea of a magnificent family struck from their sphere, and rushing like a comet into remoteness and obscurity, but attended

by a train of splendour that marks their progress, and dignifies their departure; if he can fill his imagination with this, he will not wonder at the tumultuous and romantic admiration of a boy, to whom every thing was as delightful from its novelty as its splendour.

We arrived at M--- House at a late hour; it presented in every room the appearance of an house deserted for years, and then hastily filled with every thing that luxury could accumulate, without time to arrange. The hall was filled with shrubs and flowers, of which some in default of their china vases which had been broke on the way, were obliged to take up with the turf-tubs, which were all the Irish servants had to offer for their accommodation. On the staircase, colossal bronze figures extended their hands for lamps which they did not hold, and a splendid tripod was placed in the window for want

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of a chain, though a compartment in the ceiling had been opened for its reception. The rich carpeting intended for other stairs, was eked out on the corridor by an hearth-rug of the same pattern; the rooms themselves divested of their ancient damask hangings, presented a chilling nakedness of wall, in spite of the splendid specimens of Egyptian costume that were spread on an uncovered couch in the drawing-room for inspection. Candelabra without stands, and stands without candelabra; gold fish in a vase over which my father was near falling at his entrance, as their station was occupied by a new-arrived cabinet of Egyptian antiquities in granite; and a range of exotics blowing in water placed in the window-seats, as the vessels that held them were too large for the Irish chimney piece; shades of painted muslin in imitation of gothic casements, placed beside windows which were too large; and

couches and curtains divested of their canopies, whose gorgeous and gilded cornices were some feet higher than the ceiling, but which were displayed in a kind of regular and ostentatious confusion: such was the costume of M--- House.

The room was full of company, who looked around them and on each other with sufficient surprize, there was nothing else to occupy them. Neither Lord nor Lady M. had appeared. At the upper end of the room, almost hid among the clusters of Persian roses, sat two female figures; one of them was evidently a French woman, and as I judged (rightly) the *gouvernante*; the other I judged, from a certain air of distinction, to be Miss Montolieu.

Her form was of the most delicate and fairy texture, her complexion was almost as white as her drapery, it was the paleness of that peculiar state of health, which seems affected by the irritation of

the mind: there was something fantastic almost to excess in her gestures, yet they were irresistibly graceful. She appeared hardly fifteen; yet the expression, that sometimes wandered over her features, spoke a mind and feelings that had out-gone the progress of her frame, as a mind of early, and exquisite, and dangerous maturity: her white neck and arms were entirely uncovered; her fair hair, entirely withdrawn from her face, was twisted in a tuft on the crown of the head; a book was in her hand, which she laid down every moment to reconnoitre the groupes that entered through her glass, and whisper the *gouvernante* in French, whose glaring dress and officious loudness, contrasted most forcibly the simple dress, and reserve, and languid articulation of her companion.

I suppose I gazed intently on Miss Montolieu; perhaps, too, the glow of admiration had lit up my face, for Madame la *Gouvernante* pointing to a passage in *her*

book, (Belinda) for she too was reading, said audibly, "Il y'a infiniment l'air d'un heros de Roman." I blushed, yet I did not wish to appear ignorant of French, or of the allusion, and turning to my father, I said, (I do not remember with what truth) "Apparemment c'est un grand orage." Miss M. withdrew her eyes, but Madame laughed with genuine French facilité.

A splendid time-piece, which had once sparkled on a mantle-piece in the Louvre, had pointed its enamelled hand to seven, when the profuse bows of every one near the door announced the entrance of Lord Montrevor. He paused at the door to receive his handkerchief from his Frenchman, who was drenching it with attar of rose, and then drawing up his cravat, and drawing down his shirt-sleeves by their diamond buttons, to intimate the haste he made to accommodate his Irish friends; he advanced into the circle, dispersing

timidity by bows, of which nothing could exceed the gracious humility ; and conciliating kindness by an address, of which nothing could resist the allurements.

He made the complete tour, saying the same nothings to every one, yet contriving to make them appear different and consequential to each ; and bowed with the same grace and gravity to his daughter and her governess, as to any stranger present. Of my father, whom he recollected, or affected to recollect, he took the most flattering notice ; and of me, in consequence of his introduction. There was no boy of seventeen ardent and inexperienced as I was, but must have been subdued by his address ; I thought him the most polished man in the world ; and I was convinced in a moment, he had been greatly misrepresented in the circumstances that were related of him.

The groom of the chambers had twice been desired to summon his lady in vain ;

dinner was at length announced, and we paraded into the immense *salle à manger*, where every thing announced the struggle between sudden magnificence and long neglect and desolation. The immense sideboard, of which the mahogany block legs might have supported the arches of a bridge, and the brass might have cloathed the cannon of a battery, could be brought no further than the hall from the narrowness of the doors; there therefore it rested in surly state like a deposed monarch, and a display of plate, which for its magnitude might have accompanied the sacrifice of an *hetacomb*, was displayed on a series of small tables at one extremity of the room, the other was occupied by a large family piece, representing Lady M. and some of her daughters in the costume of nymphs, sacrificing to the garden god from a drawing of Angelica Kauffmann's. This painting it was proposed by a new artist of cos-

tumes to surround with drapery instead of a frame, in order to make the pyramidal principle in the groupe more obvious: at present, however, destitute of either frame or drapery, it served to stand before one of the chimney pieces, which not being like the other of verde antique, his lordship's pure eyes could not bear to behold; while the company commended his taste with chattering teeth, as one fire in a room of vast dimensions paved with marble, reconciled them very imperfectly to the virtue that had 'comfort at one entrance quite shut out.' No light was tolerated but what was dispensed by lamps or tripods; the dinner table therefore was placed under antique vases, which, suspended from the centre of the cieling, nearly two feet distant from the summit of the epergne, shed over the table no light but 'darkness visible,' and added to the confusion with which the company beheld an heap of

dishes of form and composition utterly unknown to them, whose names the French servants repeated with seriousness and surprise, that made a jest of famine and perplexity.

Here, however, my father was perfectly at home. The arrangement of the table was somewhat singular: his lordship sat at the head of the table, near him a seat was reserved apparently for his lady. Miss Montolieu took place of the numerous female visitors who were present, and his lordship's agent (to the no small displeasure of the company) was seated at the foot, his lordship declaring that he would entrust the carving of the fish which was placed there after the soups, to no one but Mr. Griffin, who was obliged to request one of the footmen to supply him with a temporary light from the side-tables, whenever he was called on in his carving capacity. Dinner was to me more a matter of curiosity than indul-

gence, I looked more at Lord Montrevor, than at his plate or his table. His figure was the most noble and majestic I ever beheld, had he not degraded it by the levity of dress in the extreme of modern fashion. The glossy curls that shaded his face steamed with essence, his complexion was evidently heightened by art, and every part of his dress, to which an ornament could be appended, blazed with diamonds. His manner was irresistible, blending the extremes of stateliness and suavity; he made every one feel his superiority, yet acquiesce in it, and enjoy his condescension though it marked the excess of his pride.

Almost the whole of his conversation was addressed in French to the servant behind his chair, till finding, or conceiving, that an unknown language could impress his hearers with but confused notions of his grandeur, he condescended to speak English, but this was only that he

might repeat the half-English, half-classical, half-foreign names of the dishes, and wines, and furniture; the amphoree, and vases, and urns, that were always specified as being on that marble table, or that bronze pedestal, of which the multitude and antique forms combining with the darkness, made us resemble a groupe dining amid the ruins of an Herculanean theatre.

The first course had disappeared, and the enormous plateau of silver that covered the centre of the table, was removed to make room for the lighter embellishments of the second, when the door was thrown unusually wide, and a kind of silent tumult among the servants announced the entrance of Lady Montrevor. The company rose with a common expression of wonder, independent of the example of his lordship and Miss Montolieu. I know not how to speak at this moment; I wish I could borrow the com-

mon language of description, and tell as I would of any woman of fashion on her first appearance, how she glided along the room with a motion that appeared intended for air not earth, one hand grasping her drapery, the other extended in an attitude that made the command it conveyed "not to rise," impossible to obey. She approached the head of the table, which every one wished at a distance, that they might see her move to it again; she was then nearly opposite to me, I had a full, fatal view of her.

Whether in sport, or in negligence, she was in a morning dress, whose long sleeves covered her hands, and whose collar rose to her ears, a train of a length which only she could manage, flowed behind her almost to the door, and an enormous lace veil almost shutting out her profile; yet from its fineness, permitting the light curls on the cheek to be seen through it, fell equally from her head,

and extended to the ground. Her form was that of a Grecian priestess, or of the deity, at whose shrine a Grecian priestess might stand. She looked round her, something like a smile of triumph or of sportiveness was on her features; our awkward wonder, our audible murmur, must have amused her. She was determined to allow us no respite. "No stirring—I beg, I intreat, or whatever else I ought to do." The first tones of her voice, were like music to the first ears that heard it.

She turned round, "What—a chair reserved for me—this is quite the banquet scene in Macbeth. If I sit in that chair, I shall absolutely imagine myself the ghost of Banquo, or his wife; who is probably a ghost also by this time." The servant attempted to remove the chair. "No, it will do if you remove that enormous woolsack cushion; there is too much sensual accommodation in it, pour

~~un~~ habitant spirituelle." " Shall I have the pleasure of helping you to some pheasant, Lady Montrevor ?" " Was it you, my Lord, that made my empty chair be placed near you, to reconcile yourself to its contemplation ?" " La Jeunesse, apportez les fricandeaux, il me semble que Madame" " La Jeunesse, make haste and get me some soup, if the noble lord on the woolsack has finished his speech." Lord Montrevor had just called for the discarded cushion, or rather mattrass of morocco leather ; it was impossible for man to speak with more stately courtesy than his lordship, or for woman to answer with more airy contempt than his lady.

How I heard these few words I cannot imagine. I remember them only because they were her's, for I wished to be all eye. I was all eye ; and the partial and shaded glimpse of features which gleamed through the folds of her veil, like the moon through a silken, summer-evening

cloud, fed me with thoughts of imaginable beauty.

I can speak of her at no time, for every time I saw her she was different; it is difficult to speak of her mode of beauty, it is more difficult to speak of her age. She was so matchless a mistress of the art of beauty, and dress, and cosmetics, that she delighted to modify the costume of her face and form, and time, which is more stubborn than either. I have seen her when with a few arbutus berries or convolvuli twisted among her flaxen ringlets, with scarce a trace of rouge on her cheeks, but her red half-open lip warm with a tinge, like a melted ruby; her robe scarce touching the ground, and no ornament on her white bosom but one curl; she appeared hardly eighteen, if age could be attached to the style of nymph-like and ariel beauty she had chosen—and I have seen her when amid a blaze of rouge and dia-

monds, the folds of her dark and shining hair, surmounted by a sparkling tiara, and her train strewing the floor with roses, she appeared the sultaness of the seraglio, the queen of fairy-land, the presiding genius of splendour and voluptuousness, high and sparkling as a star, and o'er-informing her sphere with light and lustre; such as she was that day, her beauty was that of a Madonna, and her age seemed hardly that which is usually ascribed to the character. Her rouge had given place to pearl-powder, and her proud smile and haughty consciousness which she usually poured on strangers, were exchanged for a retiring grace, a soft suppression of charms, a partial and unoppressive glance of observation, which I could wish to have continued for ever; I could at least have been content to gaze on them for ever, but I was doomed to be the hero of the day.

Some one mentioned my name——

M 4

Lady M. immediately applied her glass, and inquired was I the gentleman to whom Miss M. owed her safety? she was answered in the affirmative, and I was assailed with a torrent of inquiries, and condolences, and commendations; which I would have silenced at any price, to have caught the sound of the only praise my ear thirsted for, but which the general clamour effectually drowned. This was not all; after the first tumult, Lady M. said to the servant in French, "I hope, La Jeunesse, you asked Mr. B.'s pardon for your unfortunate mistake." La Jeunesse, with all the glaring manner of a Frenchman, immediately advanced, and throwing himself on his knees, supplicated my pardon with the most pompous humility. I would rather a thousand times have stood a second shot from him; I felt the blood literally mounting to the roots of my hair. Lady M. saw or felt it, she called off La Jeunesse, but before

he had finished his speech, a new scene relieved me from observation.

With the same tumult, and the same dress, with which they would enter a stable, Lord Roschamp and his friend plunged into the room, and rushing up to Lord and Lady M, accosted them in tones that made the roof echo. "Why what the devil—what hours are those you keep? the fellows in the hall tell me you have been an hour at it, and it is scarce half past eight o'clock." "I always dine at the hour mentioned in my card; had not your lordship a card?" "I believe my fellow told me so; but how the devil," said he, displacing two or three persons, and seating himself beside Lady Montrevor, "does your Ladyship contrive to exist in this infernal country?" Her ladyship who had not yet opened her lips, now fixing her eyes upon him, demanded with extreme earnestness where his dog was? "My dog---my dog," said

M 5

the peer in surprize. "Yes, your **dog**, I am sure he was included in the invitation, I can't be positive that his name was not mentioned first; nothing but **the** expectation of meeting him could have dragged me down to-day."

Lord Roschamp sprung up in a moment, and rushed into the hall; "Here, Martin, my famous fellow, mount this moment again, and gallop back to Roschamp-House most amazingly, tell Masters to take off Cæsar's collar, and bring him here without slipping your foot out of the stirrup, my capital one." Just as the order was given, Cæsar, who had followed his master unobserved, bounded into the room, covered with mud of a five-miles march, and sprung upon Lady M. who received him with a scream of joy. "Oh! you beautiful---beautiful creature, kiss me, or tear my veil to fragments if you will. Sit down, my lord, since your dog is

seated, and let me tell you of his merits; nothing ever was so wonderful as my regard for this brute, except the cause of it. You know the Rees, my lord, she will be a fashionable in spite of us and herself; last winter she determined to be, or be thought musical, and actually fainted in form in her box, at a bass solo in an overture. The next day she received a poetical address on her sensibility, which she said was written by the performer who had excited it, and whom she rewarded with a splendid *douceur*. I was convinced the whole was a trick to signalize each other, and when the verses (which were execrable) were handed to me one night, I sketched in the margin a figure of the Rees, in the costume of Mahomet, entranced, and the artist picking peas out of her ear. It took immensely, and when the Rees sent to me for her verses, (as I literally believe they were) I was afraid to return them, and

told a thousand lies about it. One day as I was in the Green-Park, I took it out to show to Lord Castle-Wycomb; at that moment the Rees came up. In my confusion I dropt it; and in my confusion would have died, had not the charming animal sprung from his master, seized it at the very moment she was stooping for it, and tore the Rees's reputation to atoms in a moment.

Sir John and the peer remembered the whole story in a moment. "Damme, it was a most famous hoax; and how confoundedly blank the Rees looked, when you told her you were just going to return it, and lamented the etourderies of Cæsar." The dog was loaded with praises; and after being crowned with flowers taken from the dessert, and tearing Lady M.'s veil in resistance of his new honors, was led out of the room. Lord M. still importuning his lady to make some dinner; and her ladyship heedlessly

tracing the foliage on her silver plate with her fork, and only answering with contretemps praises of Cæsar. "He is the most amazingly famous dog in the world," said Lord Roschamp; "by my soul, I don't wonder at a Grecian nobleman having made a consul of his dog." His ignorance was too gross not to be exposed; and I was actually distracted at Lady M.'s attention to him and his dog. "I observed that history had intimated the dog was an horse."—"A bull, a bull," roared Lord Roschamp; "heh my lord, eh Sir John."—"A most famous bull upon my soul," echoed Sir John.—I was incensed at his overbearing ignorance, and began to explain with too much earnestness; perhaps Lady M. thought so, or perhaps I only flattered myself that she thought so; but rising suddenly, and half turning to the female part of the company, she said, "Shall we make our escape before we are baited by an English dog and an Irish bull."

The ladies retired. The conversation became more general. Lord Roschamp and his friend observed me with a kind of contemptuous jealousy. I felt irritated, and proud, and watchful, like a boy first animated by female excellence, and conscious or desirous of something equal to it in himself.

Lord Montrevor spoke exclusively of himself, his plans, and his circumstances. He alluded, with the utmost nonchalance, to the petite embarras that had made a retreat to Ireland for a short time expedient; but he spoke of his splendid and exclusive connexions, of his eldest son, the envoy at a northern court, and his son-in-law, the first political character in Great Britain, and of the numerous arrangements already made for his return, and that he hesitated between accepting an appointment as ambassador at ———, or a place at court, with a pension on the Irish establishment; but that he had always been in the habit

of sacrificing his own feelings, and objects, to those of his family, whom he wished to indulge with an excursion to Ireland; and I can scarcely," he continued, "regret any circumstances that have placed me in the circle by whom I feel myself so happily surrounded at present—la Jeunesse, more Burgundy."

This speech, the latter part of it particularly, uttered with a grace, which not seen, cannot be described, was irresistible to the audience. I retired amid the confusion of compliments and toasts; my whole soul was in the drawing-room; card-tables were laid, and coffee distributed. Lady Montrevor, reclining on a canopied couch, was endeavouring to describe to a few stragglers the effects of the Turkish costume, in a boudoir, which she purposed finishing from some sketches, by Miss Montolieu, that lay on a table before her. "The draperies are to be alternately suspended by silver cres-

cents and heron-plumes. What do you think, Miss Montolieu, of the Paradise-plume for the centre?" I approached the table. "Mr. Bethel, is it possible? how could you leave my lord or his Burgundy so soon? I thank you in the name of the ladies and the tea-urn. Like an ancient conqueror, I perceive you prefer being crowned with the leaf, to being crowned with the fruit. I must sketch a new costume for tea-urns; and instead of this unmeaning tripod, your figure shall be placed above or below it, to intimate the support you lend it."

Lady M. was merciless in badinage. I believe I was ten minutes in replying: "That they who could retire to her drawing-room, had little merit in the preference."—"That's vastly well; but if you want to make speeches, I beg it may be to the ladies, to whom I have been talking in my sleep for the last half hour, in order to persuade them I was awake. Nothing

is more dreadful than to see a number of unhappy females saying things to each other in that case made and provided. If you will venture on the duty, I am perfectly ready to resign in your favor. Remember to yawn lustily and with a good courage; I believe I shall give you for a watchword, *La stupidité*." I laughed, and promised to obey orders. I was contented to bear all her wit, to be permitted to look at the lips that uttered it.

"In France," said she, "as Sterne says, they order these matters better; they have a thousand ways of making a man useful or ornamental. Genlis tells a story of an officer who, as Mr. Bethel says, obeyed orders too well; and his female friends ripped all the gold-lace off his regimentals, pour parfiler, and got the only bright thing from him the poor man had to give. If you have got any gold-lace on your coat or on your lining, Mr. B., don't put us to the trouble of

ripping it off." I collected courage to observe, that her ladyship's wit was so much more brilliant, that it must eclipse every other effort.

"Tinsel, mere tinsel," said she, almost with a sigh; "but it does as well for common use. The value of wit, as the jewellers say of plates, depends more on the fashion than the weight; and this light currency saves credit, and gains time, two great points in preventing a bankruptcy of—conversation."

One of the company now ventured on an observation which she had treasured since Lady M.'s first sally, viz. that gentlemen by the rules of fashion were rendered perfectly useless to the ladies. "Pardon me," said Lady M. "we were only mistaken formerly with regard to their capacity; it was an error of our grandmothers that men could be made conversible; this we have long abjured. It is melancholy indeed to think how many

unfortunate men were persecuted to death in consequence of it; but since we have found out they are not rational animals, but merely animals of burthen, we have treated them according to their capacity, and given them our ridicules, and parasols, and trains to carry, and it succeeds vastly well. You would hardly believe what progress Lord Rosechamp, as bad as he appears, made in learning to carry my train in Kensington-Gardens on his arm."

The ladies laughed at what they could hardly venture to believe; and one of them observed, that such merit in men did not require much judgment, at least, in determining. "Oh, an immensity of judgment—judgment in persons I mean. The Rees, last summer, when she was at Brighton, made poor Sir John bear her ridicule about every day, and every one thought the weight of it would drag him into the Steine." Utterly ignorant of the female world, I observed, like a

wild Irishman as I was, that her ridicule was the least supportable burthen a lady could impose. "Do you think so," said Lady M. laughing; "I shall punish you for your contumacy, by throwing the whole weight of mine on you for the evening." As she spoke, she took up a small silk bag that lay on the sofa, and flung it sportingly on my arm. She would not have done it, had she known the danger that was in her touch. Had a mountain been heaped upon me, I could have borne it better.

She must have seen it, she took it off my arm. I purposely entangled the strings that I might see her beautiful hands near me longer. "You appear to find the ridicule intolerable," said she; "actually, if you were my Lord Lovel's ghost, who has got his own head to carry under his arm, you could not be more out of countenance."

A number of gentlemen now came up; she was instantly surrounded by

Lord Roschamp and Sir John Orberry, and others, and instantly she assumed the trifle. I retired to where Miss M., like a faint star in the neighbourhood of a full bright moon, sat reading at the extremity of the sofa. She had never opened her lips, or remitted her studies since I saw her. There was something in her silence, her reserve, and her apparent alienation from her mother that interested me. I had only heard her speak once the whole evening; as the ladies left the dining-room, I heard her say in a low voice to Lady Montrevor, "I hope you are well, I believe I have not seen your ladyship since we arrived in Ireland." I knew not how to approach her; Lady M.'s incessant and ambitious blaze of wit, though it repelled all answer, invited approach. But how could a reader be interrupted? As she read, I observed she marked some pages with leaves which she pulled from

a rose in her bosom. It was the only object about her, except her eyes and hair that was not of the purest white. The contrast struck the eye softly, but forcibly. As the door opened, one of the rose-leaves was wafted from the book, and fell at my feet. I took it up, she received it with the ease of one who was accustomed to attention; and appearing to feel that this was some demand on her attention, said in a low voice, "The impressions this charming author leaves on the mind, are not so fugitive as the marks I endeavoured to fix them by." She held out her book, I looked into it; it was Rousseau's *Héloïse*. I saw it with dread and disgust.

The whole of our library at home consisted of the works of the modern philosophers, and the French writers, who a few years before the revolution, had excited the thirst of outrage and innovation, which could afterwards be only quench-

ed by blood. When I wished for solid reading, I was presented with Godwin's **Political Justice**, Mrs. Wolstonecroft's **Rights of Woman**, Rousseau's **Contrat Social**, or Voltaire's **Dictionnaire Philosophique**. If I wished for lighter reading, I had only Voltaire's or the King of Prussia's bad verses against the Immortality of the Soul, or the insipid and infamous novels of Rousseau, Crebillon, or Diderot. The effect of this persecution on my mind was most revolting and salutary. I could not bear the names of these men; their superficial knowledge, their petulant scepticism, their sickly and anatomical sentimentality, their flimsy and inconsequential reasoning, their eternal philosophising on trifles, and treating as trifles all that is important or excellent, or precious to man, either as a rational or social agent, had filled me with an abhorrence which familiarity only increased, and which their popularity never tempted me to

conceal. I do not know that my resistance to their mischiefs would have been resolute or effectual, but for my acquaintance with Mr. Corbett. He supplied me with books which refuted them; he furnished me with conversation which refuted them; he exhibited to me a life which refuted them.

Politeness prevented me expressing what I felt at discovering Miss M.'s studies. "My library has not yet arrived," said she; "but in Rousseau I feel every defect supplied."—"I make no doubt of it," said I. "I am, however, expecting the rest every day," said Miss Montolieu. I breathed a mental wish that they might never arrive. "They are every one of them French," said the gouvernante advancing; "for I am uncommonly select in the choice of Mademoiselle's studies." I praised her selection as well as I could. "I never wish to read works in any other language," said Miss Montolieu. "*C'est la langue d'amour,*" said ma-

dame, rolling her black full eyes with strong expression. "*C'est la langue de beauté,*" said I, for our whole conversation was in French, bowing to the ladies. Miss Montolieu bowed slightly; but Madame laughed and bowed with the strongest appropriation.

No Frenchwoman can hear a compliment without believing it intended for herself. Heaven knows I was perfectly innocent of the application. Miss Montolieu's graceful declension of merited adulation, her silence, her simplicity, though all appeared the studied effect of a vitiated state of feeling, touched me most forcibly, more forcibly contrasted with the rouge, and loquacity, and glaring maniere of her companion. I was astonished that a woman highly-bred as Lady Montrevor, could be seduced by fashion, into permitting such a female to attend her daughter. But Lady Montrevor

seemed to forget her daughter and every one else in a whispered conference with Lord Roschamp. He was leaning fearlessly on the lion-fronted arm of her couch. Sometimes he whispered, and sometimes she smiled, as if the objects around them were furnishing the subject of their mirth. At length, after a most violent yawn, "What upon earth," said the peer, "could have driven you to this horrid place?"—"I protest I can't imagine," said her ladyship; "for you see it neither secures against intrusions nor inquiries."—"You can't conceive," said Lord Roschamp, after another violent yawn, "what an amazing splash it made. I never heard any thing tell so famously in my life; and happening just at that time of the year to—damme it gave all London something to talk and think of too the whole season."—"To think of?" repeated Lady M.; "Oh! you are too flattering. I could not have wrought impossibilities."—"But, damme, do you

Know what, Lady Montrevor," said Sir John Orberry, "some of your friends, and the Rees among the rest, said it was all an hoax, and that you would blaze out again more amazingly than ever." — "Did they judge from their hopes or their fears?" said Lady M. — "Oh! damme it was quite a common thing, quite the famous thing to sport a smash. There was Jacobs, the Jew-broker's son, that would have given his father's score of plums to be one of us, and acquire some notoriety. He got himself advertised in all the morning papers, and puffed his stud and curriele, and bets, and mistresses, and every thing he could think of; and, damme, finding nothing would do, at last he advertised a sale, and got himself puffed for a ruined man; and then he was nodded to in Bond-street and Newmarket by some of the knowing ones, and got most astonishing notoriety in a week." — "I wonder," said her lady-

ship, "he did not prefer getting into parliament, to getting into the list of bankrupts; he must have been notorious there in a much shorter time, either for ability or deficiency—as you my lord could inform him."—"And there was the great nabob's dowager, I have forgot her name; but she never took famously till she was quite ruined. It is the rage I can assure you, Lady M. quite the rage upon my soul. Not a creature would go to her while it was known she could afford the amazing suppers she gave; but her rooms were crowded when every one knew there was to be an execution in them. It was most amazingly famous her last explosion: d'ye remember Orberry?"—"Oh! upon my soul, I always patronized the dowager, that is, tolerated her and her suppers, I mean. I taught her how to part with a few lacks of her superfluous rupees, though, damme, it was as much as I could do to sit opposite

her when she was losing, and keep my countenance. There was a staring and sallow despair in her broad face that was quite intolerable. Damme, if she was not exactly like that bronze sphinx on the tripod there, with her fixed eyes, and her burnished skin—quite bronze upon my soul.”—“Quite bronze,” repeated Lady Montrevor; “but you did not discover that till you had taken off all her gilding.”

The incorrigibles laughed. Sir John strolled off to hedge in a bet against my father, whom he conceived to be the flat, in a game of picquet he had just commenced with Lord Montrevor. In this, however, he was mistaken; my father, who played with the judgment of a veteran, won considerably; and it was diverting to see the rueful surprise with which he parted with his money, contrasted with the courtly bows and commendations with which Lord Montrevor,

who always possessed himself, greeted his antagonist's skill and success.

Lord Roschamp was in the mean time importuning Lady M. to touch her harp; she trifled with his importunity, but when I falteringly joined in the request, she ordered the harp to be brought. "My harp has hung so long on the willows in this land of banishment," said she, "that I believe it has forgot itself to silence."

I will not describe the attitude she assumed, placing herself at it, nor the wayward and capricious graces with which she waved her arms, while affecting to be impatient at the delay in tuning it. She was one whom "every thing became:" to be proud, fastidious, fantastic, seemed in her only the excess of feeling, the frolic of luxuriance. I cannot describe her attitudes for in a short time, I wished to have no sense but that of hearing. The effect of perhaps the

first singer of the age, on an ear which had yet possessed a sensibility of pleasure it had never experienced, may easily be left to imagination. Here were not the whispered tones and imitative manner of a private performer; the influence of her character extended to her musical taste. Careless of pleasing, she was secure of admiration, and content to be admired, and the liquid chirrup and bird-like execution of her voice in high and rapid passages, was quite the supernatural of the art.

Her powers had been acquired or formed during a long residence in Italy. Music was the only thing she ever would acknowledge she had studied. She never sung any music but Italian, of English music she spoke with ludicrous contempt, and of Irish, till she heard it. Pleased with my ardent and unhackneyed admiration, she called on Miss M. to accompany her in some duets. They who have ever listened to music

from the half-open, quivering lip of beauty may guess my feelings. She was an enchantress formed for delight and destruction. The cards were now universally forsaken; those who had musical feeling, were richly recompensed, and those who had not listened that they might be able to tell others that they had heard Lady M. sing. In the midst of a note which she was permitting to die away, till the ear seemed to lose its power in the pleasure of following it, she suddenly stopped, declaring that it was always better to stop when she was tired herself, than to wait till others were tired, and no persuasions could induce her to renew her song. The card-players retired in some confusion, Lady M. expressing her regret for the disturbance, and her hope that they had all committed the state of the game to writing, before they had left their tables, as they would find it more profitable, than "marking the musick," as Lorenzo says. "You can't

conceive how much time and admiration you have been throwing away," said Lady M.—“ Music is quite *passé* now as I found it to my loss after purchasing that superb-harp, just as all the world allowed I was equal or superior to Gabrielli, in caprice at least. The deity of caprice in the form of a certain Duchess, voted dancing to be quite the fashionable thing, and instantly every one with or without ears or legs began dancing. I would not yield to this tarantula-fit. I annonnced a concert for every ball of the enemy. The contest was terrible. All the morning papers amused themselves, and the town, conjecturing whether the Duchess would be compelled to withdraw her steps, or Lady Westhampton to change her notes. I am sure the paragraphs were furnished by my *femme de chambre*, they are exactly the quaintnesses of Bennet. At last, a kind of hollow Amiens treaty of peace was patched up by some common friends : we met on a kind of mutual

ground. She told the guarantees she would sit out my concerts, and I told them I would walk through her balls, and so we danced for a couple of winters, like the sun and moon in the rehearsal, to eclipse each other, till my "total eclipse," which has left room for any other body to interpose that possesses sufficient magnitude or attraction." "Upon my soul I was at the most famous thing given in London since you left it, at the Duchess's, about three weeks ago; quite an amazing thing, the most knowing style, all the rooms by the first artists, done all with lamps and flowers and paintings. They told me all about it, for there was a kind of Ciceroni that was to tell every body when they went from the Elysian Fields to the Deserts of Arabia." I dare say the information was quite necessary," said Lady Montrevor. "But what struck me most was the Turkish Harem and her Grace as the fair Fatima." "Are you positive," said Lady Montrevor, "that it

was not the infernal regions, and her Grace as the principal 'fury?' "Upon my soul she might," said the describer weary of questions, he did not understand, "for ought I know to the contrary." "Or I either," said Lady M. with sarcastic emphasis. "But Orberry, why the devil you who are so amazingly astonishing at descriptions, why don't you tell Lady Montrevor of the Duchess last *fête*." "Duchess?" said the baronet, "Damme, it was an hollow thing in Duchess's favor for the first mile, then the bets inclined." A general laugh completely awoke him. "Why what the devil Orberry, damme but I believe you were asleep." "Upon my soul I believe I was. Her ladyship's singing in that heavenly sort of manner, always puts me to sleep." "Don't be at all surprized," said Lady M. "Caliban says just as much of himself." "I feel I have had an amazing loss," said the baronet. "A bagatelle on both sides," said her lady-

ship, "you lost my song, and I lost your praises, and I beg you will endeavour to think as little of your loss as I do of mine." "Mais allons," said she, throwing herself back on the couch. "Sir John's somnolency is infectious, draw the priestess of indolence back to her temple, mes fils," we replaced the couch in the recess. "Thank you, I shall not imprecate the same blessing on you, that she did on her bearers, for I shall want you to live to draw me out again, to wish the company bon soir whenever they please to allow me one." The company were now separating, when supper was announced. Lady M. did not appear at it. I lingered in the drawing room till the last had quitted it. I was the last who saw her. I thought she waved her hand to me.

END OF VOL. I.

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THE
WILD IRISH BOY.

I GOT home on fire with emotions I did not understand. No man, or woman, or child, knew less of love than I did. When I thought of her surpassing beauty, of the intolerable splendour of her wit and grace and manner, of attractions which annihilated the power of time, and almost that of humanity; when no other thought was present to me for hours; when my senses seemed all absorbed in mental sight, and that sight had but one object; when every place I beheld was the drawing-room of Montrevor-House, and in solitude and society I only saw its brilliant enchantress

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when amid the incessant and restless scintillations of her wit and her beauty, I still felt that she was unhappy, that her endless struggle for wit and distinction was too like a struggle to hide inward pain, and thought of it with agony and fondness, I still did not know that I loved. I owed this fatal ignorance to my inexperience of life, as well as inexperience of my own heart. I did not believe it possible seriously to love a married woman. Of the vices of society I knew but little, and there is a spell shed over the higher duties of life by the indefinite sacredness of authority, which a young mind dreads to break. I abandoned myself to the fatal indulgences of thought. I believed there was no more of crime in fixing my whole soul upon her image than upon a picture or a statue, and as little danger. I knew not that I loved, till the knowledge was too late.

They who expect to hear of impurity

palliated and blanched by the pencil of sophistry, or the ties of society dissolved before the breath of sentiment, should read these pages no further. They will neither find guilt justified, nor wretchedness exalted into fantastic and impossible felicity. I avow my errors, but I avow them to deplore them; I exhibit them, but I exhibit them that their consequences may warn, not corrupt, and I exhibit them without fear, for they were errors of feeling, not of conduct, they therefore exhibit no opportunity of seductive description, and topical vice, they were errors only of feeling, and therefore fatal as they have been to peace, I display them, that the more terrible consequences of practical deviations may be inferred and deprecated from their display.

For many days I was immersed in a quiet delirium; I never uttered her name, though I loved to hear it uttered by others, and was sufficiently feasted with the wonder, and censure, and admi-

ration, and a thousand awkward expressions of mingled and singular feeling, such as she inspired among her starers, for they could hardly be called any thing else. For the first week I dreaded to see her; she was one only to be seen at intervals; a perpetual blaze is only productive of pain and blindness. But Masseau, with all the adroitness of a Frenchman, procured admission among the higher servants of Montrevor-House, and then procured such information of the habits of its inmates as could only be interesting to a Frenchman or a lover. I suffered him to tell me of Milord's and Mesdemoiselles' (for there were two daughters) domestic habits, of which I do not remember one word; and he then proceeded without an inquiry from me to tell me that Miladi had never been visible to domestic or intimate, or visitor, since her arrival in Ireland, except the day I saw her, on which day, after declining Milord's intreaties (by message) that she would honor thy table be

her presence, she thought proper to rise just as the dinner-bell was ringing, and hurry down in her robe de chambre, hardly allowing Bennet time to pin on her veil. The time before and since that day she passed almost entirely in bed, suffering no attendance except from her own woman, who gave her her laudanum and coffee, the latter of which she took four times a day; and when Bennet, who was a woman of some merit and consequence with her lady, ventured to expostulate with her on such dangerous habits, her lady told her that she had no object in life but to sleep out the remainder, and that she only lamented she could not sleep away what was past as well as what was to come, "but that," said she, "neither coffee nor laudanum can do for me now." The account concluded with lamentations by all the performers for the lost splendours and luxuries of London, where their lord and lady had outshone all that was splendid

or luxurious, but they comforted themselves by the observation that it was impossible that their lord, whose eldest son was of such abilities and consequence as to be an ambassador at the age of six and twenty, whose youngest son was one of the most distinguished and popular officers of the day, and a peculiar favorite with royalty, and whose three eldest daughters were married respectively to the Premier, a Scotch Marquis, and a commoner of the first talents and influence, should be suffered with such an host of alliances and connexions, to languish away life in banishment. To all other parts of the account I was deaf, but of Lady Montrevor. How was I witched by the caprice, and exalted by the magnanimity, and touched by the real and inward wretchedness ! It was evident she knew nothing of domestic happiness ; she could not love her husband : he was a man vain and insincere, and unprincipled ; she did not love her

n- children, they were perhaps careless, per-
n- haps unworthy of her affection; yet with
on all her powers of exciting and enjoying
as admiration, with her wit and her beauty
d yet blazing in their meridian, she had fol-
of lowed them into obscurity and solitude,
rs though the world would have detained
th and justified her, though she had neither
rs consolation nor praise for the effort, though
r, she lay down to lose in artificial and
e baneful sleep the memory of what she
f was, and where she was. Lost in thinking
d of her, I neglected all around me: I neg-
l- lected the society of Hammond, and Cor-
t bett, and my uncle, from the latter in-
w deed I was repelled by the hints of Delo-
d raine, for I was jealous to a degree that
e at any time made me prefer the most ob-
is noxious and ridiculous conduct to the
c pain of my own feelings. "You are an
s- amazing favorite with the Chieftain," said
e Deloraine: "you are certainly in for his
r acres and his thousands, and his castle, if

it will hold up so long ; and upon my soul I am heartily glad of it : a wild, dashing, careless fellow like me would scatter the whole system to the devil in a few years ; but you are a sedate, sentimental youth, who will drain your bogs, and repair the old towers, and beget children to inhabit them, and live like a saint, and die like a Patriarch among them." This was very "tragical mirth" to me, I could not endure it, I writhed under it ; this creeping, ingratiating, Joseph-Surface character, was the last in the world that resembled mine, or that I wished it to resemble. I struggled under a fictitious consciousness of mendicant duplicity, with a spirit that despised money, and that would not falsify its sentiments or habits for the wealth of the world. There was but one way to extricate myself : I entirely neglected my uncle, and though my own heart reproached me, and the querulous weakness of deserted age reproached me, I bore it

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all, not without anguish, but without relenting ; yet I wished I could be allowed to reverence dignity, and to love affection, without a suspicion of selfishness or aggrandizement. I attached myself much to Deloraine ; I forced myself to bear and even to assume much of his coarseness of language and thought, that I might at least make him all the amends of friendship. Hammond saw my estrangement with surprize, but it was not in Hammond's nature to complain. But these things were to me as the visions of a dream, and the only reality of life had become a vision of but one bright and lovely phantom. I cannot tell the childish joy with which I saw the carriage and liveries of the Montrevors coming up the avenue at Lemon-Grove, though I knew that carriage did not contain her. Lord M. made it a point to accept every invitation from the company he had entertained, and every morning, while his

Frenchman dressed him, execrated the wine and dinners, and company, and country, in which his attendant joined with the utmost devotion, and then ruefully asked did they come among that gens barbare, pour mourir-la—"Non pour mourir," said his lordship, "mais pour vivre, M. Boivin; we must suffer here a little longer on Col. Montolieu's account; I have been always a man who made sacrifices to my children." The Frenchman, out of humour at the delay, muttered something about his making sacrifices to his children, and hasted away to tell Masseur of his despair. To my father's he came with less repugnance, they agreed pretty nearly in their judgment of wine, dinners, and life. The evening would have passed in the silent luxury of gourmands, but the Chieftain was there: he was no eater, no drinker, and the light topics that were hardly allowed to interrupt the pleasures of ap-

petite, he would not join. He watched for the conversation of the English peer; he heard nothing but the axioms of Apicius delivered with the spirit of a Petronius. He was disconcerted and astonished. The very dignity of Lord M. seemed to him like trifling; it was modern dignity, polished and pliant and accessible. The Chieftain had formed his own ideas on different modes of life.

Any man who withdraws his eye from a Gothic ruin to fix it on a Grecian palace will find the transition unfavorable. He will find in its very symmetry, and grace, and milder majesty, something mean and minute. Lord M. saw a venerable old man, of lofty demeanour, sitting in jealous and gloomy silence; he imagined that his reserve proceeded from a consciousness of superior dignity, and to dissipate it, addressed some trifle to him in the most flattering tones by the name of Mr. De Lacy.

The Chieftain retreated. "I am not Mr. De Lacy."—"I beg pardon, I am unacquainted with your title; a physician, perhaps, I should have collected that from your costume." The scarlet cloak was frequently worn by foreign physicians, and there was something strikingly foreign in my uncle's air, independent of his costume.

He was too much provoked to let himself be mistaken any longer. He waved his arm. "I am De Lacy, my Lord;" "my illegitimate children, (if I had any,) would be *Mr.'s* De Lacy; a designation borne, I suppose, by your Lordship's younger sons." His Lordship's retenue was never to be surprized or vanquished: he immediately recollected the modes of the Irish or Highland chieftains; observed that it was highly proper that primitive dignity should be marked by some striking and uncommon designation; that the peerage was too cheap a distinc-

tion; that he, himself, though distinguished by an illustrious lineage, venerated his ancestors more for their virtues than their titles; he concluded by asking De Lacy to take wine with him, with a countenance of which the composure was easy only to him. The Chieftain was not so easily conciliated; he mixed the wine with water, and observed that the sentiments he had just heard his Lordship utter on the distinction of high descent, were, he believed, not common among the English peers." "Among all of them who possess the distinction I should hope," said his Lordship, who really was proud of his rank. "Men who cannot remember their grandfather's names, may be allowed to be indifferent to what those names might have been, but we may be allowed to improve higher feelings than memory in a review of an ancestry which extends to the Conquest.—You remember the date of the Conquest," said he, "addressing him-

self to my uncle, whom he intended to fell with his own weapon. The Chieftain said it was easy to remember the dates of recent transactions. "Recent, my very good sir, do you call the conquest of England by the Duke of Normandy recent?" "My Lord," said the Chieftain, "to a Milesian every thing is recent but his own pedigree." Whatever was the effect of this speech on Lord M. it was impossible to perceive. The Chieftain was too important a man in the country not to be included in his canvassing plans. He applied himself more closely to my uncle; spoke humbly of the English peerage, and the English cabinet and English measures; censured the patched and party-aided conquest of Henry the Second; execrated the memory of Oliver Cromwell; and spoke with respect of a work in which it was attempted to prove that Ireland was one of the first countries which was inhabited after the deluge. The

Chieftain, whose notions of Irish antiquity were indefinitely romantic, seemed not perfectly satisfied with this limitation; and his Lordship, who was not incumbered with too much deference for the Mosaic system, proceeded to observe, that he had little doubt that there were nations of an antiquity which might make theology rather jealous if it were examined. Here he was checked by the priest who always attended the Chieftain, who hinted that he would neither be pleased nor convinced by any thing that impeached the verity of the sacred writings. "At least, my Lord," said my father, who was amused by his dexterity, "it is not your fault if the Irish are not the first nation in the world." "Nor their own," rejoined his Lordship, bowing to the company. This was irresistible; and the Chieftain, in language which shewed he had neither forgot the feeling nor the habits of high-breeding, pressed his Lordship to honor the Castle

with his presence so zealously that his Lordship could not refuse. He appeared to feel as little difficulty in passing over the stiff and outre manners of Miss Percival, and in praising the graceful timidity of Sybilla, to whom he brought a most flattering invitation from Lady Montrevor to a ball she purposed giving the following week; though his lady, just before his coming out to dinner, had positively assured him that he might give a ball, and dance at it if he thought it proper or wholesome; but it must be a *pas seul* if it depended on her, as no persuasion could induce her to witness the ass-race he was determined on.

His Lordship, who knew that to succeed in his plan, he must be all things to all men, as well as to all men, and that nothing could succeed better with females than a ball, solicited, and remonstrated in vain, till at length condescending to be angry, he told her Ladyship he might as well reason

with a stone. "Very probably you are, my Lord, after my encountering the gorgon faces of those country ladies to please you the other day." "To please me, Lady Montrevor, I beg you will not be so unjust to your own motives; it was caprice, it was whim, it was Lord Roschamp, or his dog, or a wish to exhibit your morning-dress, because I wished you to appear with splendour. As you make a merit of perpetual opposition, I do not wish to deprive you of the only one you can claim." "I am sorry your Lordship does not allow me an opportunity of doing you equal justice, but how shall I ascribe even one to you." "Your wit or your anger, Lady M. are to me like the lightning playing on the 'impassive ice;' you know me; you know I only came here to go away, to go with some trifling advantage, some accession of interest or consequence, that will change the scene on my return, and make people forget where I was, and why. In

these back-settlements, among the savages, I will not stay, that's flat." "Which is flat, your Lordship's argument or your wit?" "How is it?" said the peer, in the most soothing accents, "that whenever I wish to consult you on business, you always assume a face of levity, and"—

"If it is only a face of business you want, my Lord, I beg you will let me summon Bennet, who had the busiest face you ever beheld a moment ago, you and she may consult vis-a-vis or tete-a-tete, or—Bennet what business had you with that face you thrust in here just as my lord came in."

"I only wanted to see if your ladyship is here or not." "Well, and now that you do see my ladyship is here or not"---

"I only wanted a book that madame said she had mentioned to your ladyship, that she wished to borrow for the young ladies."

"My compliments to the young ladies, and I fancy they might borrow for it themselves." "Dear mamma," said the

youngest, half entering, "so I would, but I thought you might not like it." "You were bid to say so, my dear, but even that is better than being bid to feel, as you would want to be, I suppose, if I did like it, and expected you to like it. Don't be afraid Ida, or ashamed, the heart is a part of the system that will spare us many a blush, if we are without it: and now, my dear, to business. What book do you want?" "They are some French fairy-tales, mamma, I have forgot the name, but I should know the book, for the cover is all gilt and varnished." "A French fairy-tale, and all varnished: sit down, my dear, on that sofa, and I will tell you a fairy-tale in English, and it shall be an unvarnished tale." The child wondering at the permission sat down. "Is it of me, or of the griffin-head you lean on, you are afraid, Ida?" The child was silent. "Always try to look at your ease, my dear, however you may feel, '*Am I on a bed of roses?*'"

The child did not understand her mother's wit, and was impatient for the story: Lord Montrevor was impatient too, but not for the story. "About a thousand years ago, Ida, when matters were very like what they are at present, there lived a giant, who inhabited a castle of which he had plundered some unfortunate caitiff, who had become, as we are told, a knight-errant in consequence, looking for his castle like a discarded knight at chess. This giant detained, among other prisoners, a lady of whom he had possession neither by right nor by courtesy, but by the most mean and unprincipled of frauds—I believe the language of romance would call it foul treachery, but I am not speaking the language of romance, am I, my Lord?" Lord Montrevor picked his teeth with great diligence. "In process of time, this castle was pulled about his ears, and the greater part of it fell on the poor lady's head, or her heart, no matter where. The

giant immediately carried her off to a desert country, all bog and savage dens and savage faces, and he proposed here, by feeding hogs and selling them, or their grunts, to recover all his grandeur." His lordship hemmed with visible uneasiness. "But he insisted upon his unfortunate lady feeding the hogs too, upon which she said—what did she say, my lord?" Lord M. muttered to himself between his shut teeth, "By G—d, there's no bearing this:" and then added, in the sweetest tone, "Is not your ladyship detaining Ida too long from her morning-walk?" "I must finish the story, my lord: the lady speaking with firmness for once, answered, I retired with you, because the dignity of retirement was all that was left us, but I never will degrade that dignity by a display of consequence I do not possess, and of promises never to be fulfilled, nor impoverish my son by the expenses of a doubtful struggle, nor confound my own selfish schemes with

the interests of my family, that I may revel in worthless luxury again, and parade about in the shameless impunity of ostentatious wickedness." "Did the lady say all that to the giant, mamma?" said the child, who possessed something of her mother's wit. "Yes, my dear, she was at length provoked to say it, for she was harassed and weary; she had no support, no refuge, no resource, none, none," said Lady M. striking the sofa with a kind of sorrowful impatience. "Had she no children, mamma?" said the child, looking earnestly at her mother. "Ida, my dear," send Bennet here, "I want some rouge, these odious turf fires flush one so." Lady Montrevor rose as she spoke, and put her hand to her cheek, she walked up to Lord M. who was calmly comparing his watch with a time-piece on a cabinet, without observing that the latter had stopt. "My lord, I have put on my face of business, as you may see if you will condescend to

look at me, and—" "Pardon me, Lady M. I wish, I request you to be calm, to drop this business. We will speak of it when we have forgot this explosion. You were warm, or perhaps I was warm; to hear the purity of my intentions mistaken was, perhaps, too painful for me." "Allow me, my lord, I have but little to say, I know this whole business completely; I know your heart, I beg pardon, your intentions I should say. You purpose to get this borough for George at the expense of a few good dinners and bad promises; you will charge him a most enormous bill of costs. He has no means of paying it either from his appointment or otherwise; you will take his bond for it in your kindness or your wisdom, raise money on it at the expense of some deluded wretch, who will be ignorant of the colonel's privilege till it is too late, and you will have his ruin presented to you in the morning-paper as you swallow your chocolate, and,

swallow them both *avec le meme gout*. This, or some such thing, happened on Aurelian's appointment. You see I understand it all, too well to take any steps, dancing or otherwise, to promote it. Now, my lord, the explosion is over; but remember that lava, when it grows cool, is the hardest substance in the world." "I am perfectly astonished Lady M. at your total want of *retenùe*; I am really surprised and distressed to a degree that"— "So am I, my lord, surprised myself; you so seldom hear from me the language of a wounded spirit; it is indeed so useless to utter it, that you have perhaps mistaken the power of concealing my feelings, for a total extinction of them; the mistake was worthy of you, I am ashamed to have rectified it. Think me so still; I can bear it; I can bear any thing better than to be known by one who cannot know me, and pitied and pacified and managed by one who has no heart." "I am convinced,

Lady Montrevor, your cooler judgment will do me justice;" and he bowed as low as if retiring from the presence of majesty. Lady Montrevor flung herself on the sofa, and spread her handkerchief over her face; she remained quiet so long that Bennet, who had come in with the rouge, thought she was asleep, and was retiring. "Isn't it the hour for taking my drops," said her lady in a low voice. "I thought your ladyship was asleep." The drops were brought. Lady M. slowly drew the handkerchief from her face. Traces of tears were on it. "Heaven bless me and forgive me," said Bennet, "what can be the matter with your ladyship? I'll be hanged if this vile country will not be the death of us all. Will you take the drops, my lady?" "No," said Lady Montrevor, in a tone which Bennet had never heard before, "it is no matter, it will be all over soon." She repeated these words three or four times. "Will your ladyship have

the rouge at least?" said Bennet, querulously. "Yes, yes, the rouge, give me the rouge," said her ladyship, starting up. "Here, my lady, here—Oh, bless and forgive my stupid head, this is not the rouge, this is the box with the Egyptian medal that was on your ladyship's toilet, and in my confusion I"—"Was it! Oh well—Bennet, I think I have heard you admire that medallion, take it and wear it, or bury it—but Bennet, never while you live, tell any one you saw me shed a tear." Bennet promised with her eyes overflowing; and then related the whole to Mr. Boivin, by whom it was told to Masseur. But after this communication I strictly forbade Masseur to seek for or repeat any more; the sufferings of such a mind were no subject for the curiosity of a domestic. I could not endure to hear her spoken of as unhappy; yet I thought of her unhappiness myself with approbation, even with delight. Her lofty impatience, her silent

unpublished struggles, the anguish of a mind too proud for complaint, and despairing of affection, were all indications that her present habits were all forced and unnatural, that her vanity, her levity, her dissipation, were all artificial and irksome; that she was formed for better things, and was conscious of it, that to other children she might have been an affectionate mother, and with another husband, an exemplary wife.

Perhaps the reformation of a veteran woman of fashion by a boy of seventeen will be laughed at as the excess of moral knight-errantry, yet I fed my mind with it in delight, and when it seemed hopeless, I still thought how passing beautiful she was. Cards, however, were issued for the ball; the country was delighted with Lord M.'s hospitality. No people are so easily summoned to festivity as the Irish. I went in hope and fear; she had declared she would not appear: but I should at

least hear her name uttered, I should see the spot over which she had walked, I should see again the last place in which I had beheld her. Those who have not loved may laugh at this as they may.

Sybilla and I arrived late; the rooms were decorated with a splendor perfectly new to us; we were both just from school; we had never danced on floors chalked with Mosaic devices, nor moved through groves of rose and geranium, relieved by walls of the lightest green and interspersed with lights, that gleamed like stars through the foliage.

Sybilla called it a place of enchantment, and I looked around for the Armida. The dancing had begun, and all eyes were attracted by the sylph-like form, and exquisite flight of Miss Montolieu through the dance; I have no other name for motions so light and rapid; her limbs were like pinions, and her drapery like air; it was the first time I had beheld the fashionable costume, and upon another it might

have "altered my cheek with some thoughts infirm;" but there was something so aerial and infantine about Miss Montolieu, so pure in her snowy drapery and her complexion, that I gazed on her form and its fantastic undulations, as I would on the gambols of a fairy queen.

I resigned Sybilla's hand to Hammond, and was gazing on the orange tree which had been placed on a post of honor in the dancing-room, when Lord Montrevor, who was bowing his way through a croud of young men, came up. He was passing on with the same gracious recognition, when he suddenly checked himself—"Mr. Bethel, is it possible you don't dance; I thought you were dancing with Miss Montolieu; I can't imagine by what mistake the ball has commenced without you: I assure you it is my wish to distinguish the relative of my very respectable friends at Lemon-Grove and the Castle, by every possible attention." This was

flattering; and the delicacy with which he sunk my relationship to his respectable friends was to me still more so. I bowed and blushed, and uttered some inarticulate expressions of respect and pleasure. "I assure you, Mr Bethel, my expressions of regard are not trivial or commonplace." His lordship depressed his voice, and assumed an air of importance. "I consider you a very distinguished young man, there are few, very few, of whom I would say so much, or think so much; if you will accept the advice and directions of a man, whose influence and experience in life may be of no trivial use to you, it is probable you will make a very conspicuous figure; my plans, with regard to this county, which I shall communicate to you as soon as possible, will in their result prove highly advantageous to you. I cannot say more at present; I am not a man in the habit of committing myself: but I beg you will on no account suffer yourself to

be surprized into a discovery of the sentiments I have communicated to you to-night—we will speak of these things another time.” Here his lordship glided away to repeat nearly the same words to Hammond, whose father’s numerous tenantry rendered him an object of nearly equal canvassing consequence. My eyes, as Lord M. retired, were again bent on the door, but no longer bent on vacancy; she was there, but her form enveloped again in a morning dress, was so dubious, that, till I heard her laughing loudly with Lord R. and Sir John, who stood lounging near the door, I almost looked on her as the vision of a longing eye. Motion is not always voluntary; I knew not where I was till I felt myself near her, and then I wished I was again at a distance, where to gaze was safer; for of such beauty the near presence was dazzling and oppressive. When I saw her most exquisite form, whose fullness appeared to have hardly

reached an early maturity; her attitudes displaying an undulation of youth and a luxury of grace; her face so beautiful, that the eye which was raised to it, languished with its radiance, but could not withdraw itself; her sparkling and ambitious manner claiming homage from all, and sporting with the homage of all. When I saw her, this brilliant and bewitching creature, who seemed formed for some peculiar world of splendor and pleasure, where vanity was no folly, and dissipation not a crime, when I saw her wretched, and concealing her wretchedness under the glare of her wit and beauty from every one but herself, my heart was wrung with love and pity. I would have shed its warmest blood to have served and saved her; but I was carried away like herself by her gaiety and facility, and forgot all pain in the sound of her voice. "This is vastly gay and ridiculous; I protest my levee is quite crowded — my levee actually, I have but

just risen, if you will believe me or my costume."—"Damme I am just as I was all day, myself," said Lord R. "Just as you are every day, I dare say, my lord; but I protest I do this out of pure politeness; it is dreadful to think of these poor people assembling from all quarters to stare at me, and going home quite disappointed. I was determined they should have something to stare at; Lady Montrevor in her robe du matin at midnight will last them all their lives, and probably add some years to it; I can't imagine how I could have gratified them more, except by adopting the costume of Grannweal or the Castle-Spectre." I ventured to say that to submit to be gazed at, was only paying the tax on beauty, and was sorry the next moment I had said any thing so foolish and flippant. "I beg pardon," said Lady M. putting up her glass, "I hope what you said will bear repetition, for I cannot for my soul attend to any thing

but that very interesting figure in blue : she is the only creature I ever saw whom real timidity did not render awkward—who is she?" I was too proud and delighted with her notice of Sybilla not to mention her name immediately, besides I was afraid Lord R. and Sir John might say something idle or impertinent. "At present I wish she would walk or dance away, for she is hiding a multitude of sins in the performer next to her; but that lady will not be hid I see. Look at her, my lord, she seems to say to her partner, like Lear to his pursuers, 'If you have it you shall get it by running,' and now the poor deluded girl will go home and tell her friends she has been dancing. But, for Heaven's sake! who is that detestable personage who is rising to dance en masse, with a plumage like that in Otranto? She actually is, my lord, the picture of the Rees, don't you remember the Rees, her first Winter in London, when every woman in

the world, or out of it, went about with her hair disarranged and streaming like Parisot's in *La Fille Sauvage*. The Rees never could go any where unless *capped* and *jewelled*; actually when she entered the room with that fabric of gold muslin, and diamonds, and Ostrich feathers, she was completely a fore-shortening of one of her native Elephants with his castle on his back."

Lady M. was incessant in ridicule; she would hardly pause while I begged leave to introduce my sister, whom she received with a grace and dignity that seemed too evidently a determination to dazzle the timid rustic, who confessed to me that not even to behold such beauty would she encounter its whole aspect fixed on her again. "Miss Bethel, I am so charmed with your performance, you must dance again for my pleasure, and your own I hope. Lord Roschamp, won't you dance, Sir John wo'n't you?" No, damme,

not I, no 'pon my soul, can't dance, quite lame, quite exhausted looking on," was repeated by both loungers. I felt no small resentment at this inverted proposal, and insolent rejection, but Lady M. according to her own notions, was securing the highest advantage to Sybilla, by the notoriety of introducing her to two fashionables. "Don't be surprised, Miss Bethel," said her ladyship, "these men are not the helpless objects they appear; they have eyes, though they cannot see; and they have limbs though they cannot move, and they have ears, though they will not hear sometimes. They are at present spell-bound by fashion, and unless the witch waves her wand again, they will probably remain in this melancholy state during the term of their animal lives: in the meantime, to alleviate their misery, I give them as much employment from time to time as they are capable of. I gave your brother my ridicule the other night to carry,

but I believe I shall bestow it on Sir John—he is a much fitter object for it.” “Oh, damme, then,” said Sir John, who wished to make a hit, “you must take the perfectionnaire out of it, for your Ladyship has such frequent occasion for it, that I never should be able to do it.” “That you may understand Sir John, Miss B. (which is not always easy) you are to know that a perfectionnaire is a box containing compartments for rouge and fard, whichever you may want. Now I perceive by your blushing that violent and virtuous red, that you’re determined to go home and tell your grandmother of all the mischief Lady Montrevor has said and done to you; by the bye, that very feeling or habit of blushing is one of the best arguments in the world for rouge; you, who don’t use it, are obliged to blush for every one’s enormities, while I who do, am never seen or felt even for my own.” As she spoke, I thought her eye wandered towards me; my heart was throbbing to

tell her there was one who felt she could blush and could weep, one who pitied, who honored, who——I dared not have told her that.

A considerable circle had now collected round the door, those who were near enough, listened, and those who were not, stared; but the moment the heat became intense from the crowd, Lady M. declaring she was expiring with cold, and drawing her veil over her face, disappeared in a moment. I remained gazing on the spot where she had stood, and listening to sounds that I thought still floated on the air. I was roused by Sybilla's taking my arm as a kind of protection from the persecution of Sir John and the peer, who were applying their glasses within six inches of her face, and repeating to each other—"damn'd good faith—develish well-limbed—rather too flimsy though." I was withdrawing with my eyes fixed on their unmeaning faces with an expression they need not have miscon-

strued, for I was provoked by a long course of tacit insult, and a kind of tacit rivalry; but Hammond came up, for the last dance of the set was just commencing, and I again lingered near the door without a single motive, but that it was the last place in which I had beheld her. Sir John and Lord Roschamp lounged there still, tapping their ancles with short switches, and occasionally uttering oaths by way of interjections of ridicule or contempt, when Lady Montrevor again flashed on us, her whole dress and costume altered as if by enchantment. The robe de chambre was thrown off, her whole dress was a frock of the richest white lace over a pink silk vest and pantaloons; her arms, for sleeves she had none, were clasped at the shoulder with pearls, her bosom was hardly varied by a pearl chain, and her shining hair folded round her head was suspended in front by an ornament of pearls, while the richer ornament of her

ringlets fell behind in a cluster as if accidentally escaping from the tuft in which they were collected. No language can convey the feelings with which I saw her approach; the first I will ingenuously confess was an almost painful sense of bashfulness: I was a boy, unused to the display of female attractions, and utterly unacquainted with that full and tempting developement that distinguished the modern costume; I turned away sick with desire and delight; at the second glance, I felt my eye more steady, and my cheek less flushed; at the third, I knew not what happened, for I know not when it ceased. There was a pomp of allurements about this high and luxurious beauty, that inspired more voluptuousness than awe. I approached her with less diffidence, every man approaches a woman drest as she was with diminished diffidence.—“Damme, you’re equipped for dancing, am sorry I wore boots,” said the baronet

and his peer, as she approached, viewing her with about the same intelligence of pleasure that they would an haunch of venison or a fresh bottle of Burgundy. "I ought to be much obliged to you or your boots," said Lady M. "but I have no intention of dancing." "But will you not look on the dancers? they had the good fortune to amuse you the last performance, and their powers or their zeal don't seem at all diminished." All this was very silly, but I said it to withdraw her from the door. I almost ventured to touch her hand as I spoke. She did not withdraw it. "Really I am afraid to venture too near them, there is a kind of wild animation in their movements, that makes me strongly suspect they are all under the influence of Oberon's magic flute, and cannot help what they are doing; now I can, unless I venture within the spell, and then I should be compelled to gambol along with them, and then"—"And what then,"

said I, for her facility had made me bold. "Why then, perhaps, I might lay hold on you, and compel you to join me in poetical justice." "If that be the condition, I shall tempt you to the very verge of the spell—we are within its influence, do you feel it, or is it not enough in poetical justice that I should feel it?" "Oh, perfectly enough, but in civil justice I should inform you, that we are at the end of the set, and that I am the most capricious creature in the world, and that unless you can find some one who would rather see me dance than herself, which will be sufficiently hard, it is probable I shall be in my first sleep by the time you have succeeded to the head of the room." Sybilla was near the top, but the moment I hinted Lady Montrevor's wish, every one made room for her. I led her to the head of the room; it was a moment of joy and pride, every eye was on us; to have touched her hand but in solitude was

a dream that made me blush even in sleep; but to have and to hold it in the presence of multitudes who envied and wondered—was it a wonder that I was intoxicated with pleasure and vanity? Let my age and country, and constitution, be remembered. Lady M. ‘saw the madness rise’—she felt that one of us was imprudent—no woman ever knew how to laugh off a thing with such levity. “This gentleman,” said she to the ladies near her, “insists upon my teaching him the mode of dancing in fashion, in the reign when I first went to Court; he is so good as to dispense with the hoop and lappets, and minuet, and so he will probably with the rest of the ceremony—we had better go off as soon as possible.” I will not attempt to describe her dancing, but by its effects; it was an exercise in which I was said to excel—I was at least sufficiently fond of it; yet all power, except that of gazing at her exquisite motions, forsook

me ; she moved like a genius moving his pinions on the confines of light. An involuntary burst of admiration issued even from the insipid women who had collected about her with no other object than to wonder at her dress. For a few moments I floated in the air, as she seemed to do ; she had hardly glided through half the set, when she ran abruptly out of it, declaring that she never would dance again “ till a new comet appeared, or the Irish minstrel could play in time, or”—I followed her to catch the sentence, or her hand, which she had but half withdrawn ; it was too much for me, her beauty and her dancing, and her facility, and she was one who never abated the lustre of her perfections ; she passed through the rooms, and I still followed her. Sir John and Lord Roschamp were in the gallery where refreshments were spread ; a part of the entertainment to which they seemed to do justice with infinite satisfaction. “ Was

your ladyship dancing? damme, I'd have given any thing to see you dance. You will probably see me dance, with the help of another bottle of Champagne, if I stay." She passed on quickly, as if with some intention or object. I followed her almost passively; she entered a recess at the end of the gallery, feebly illuminated, and almost filled with roses; she sunk in a seat, neither of us spoke; my heart beat audibly; she was beside me so beautiful in silence and thought, so beautiful in partial shade and surrounding odours. I spoke first—my mind was burning, but my voice was trembling. I know not what I said—something about the roses, their fragrance, and their foliage, and the light that trembled through them, a shadowy and mellow ray like moonlight. "Yes," said she, absently, "able to chase all sadness, all sadness but despair." I was flushed, and daring with indulgence—"What a word is despair for such lips as

those to utter?" "It is the only one they are accustomed to utter in solitude." I caught at the last word—"This solitude was formed for other sounds—This place may seem for lovers' leisure made."—"Now, instead of pure description, shall we have a little sense," said she, hastily. "I brought you here, because in this shade your face bears a strong resemblance to a person, a friend, the only one I ever had—one whom I have lost for ever." Her voice was not lost in tears, but a wild and solemn break suspended the sound that thrilled me through. Her beauty, her sorrow, her despair, for her face, darkened by the shade, was fixed by an expression of absolute despair, tore my heart with something above human passion; she seemed like a fallen angel sitting sadly on the verge of light, and viewing her "lost estate."

I thought she only wanted a tongue to soothe, an arm to shield, a bosom to

shelter her, to be the most excellent of beings: I thought her one whom the world had depraved, and of whom the world was not worthy. Myriads would I have given to have restored her to the unblenched majesty of her first estate, to that creature which Nature and Heaven had intended her to be. My senses were inflamed with wine and voluptuous motion; my forehead was throbbing, and my heart too with wild and luxurious emotions of sorrow and love. I fell at her feet: I said all that passion, and solitude, and seventeen, suggested; I implored but "to be her slave, but to be thought of as one to whom life was nothing, unless it might serve her as one whose heart could feel and bleed, and had felt and would bleed for her, as one whose silent homage never would offend her pride, whose breathless passion never would insult her purity." While I was speaking I did not raise my eyes, it was

not necessary, the tone of her voice was enough; her whole character seemed to change in a moment: in a moment she was again the vain, volatile, dazzling Lady M. “Vastly well delivered, and not mouthed as many of our players do; but Mr. B. I must beg you to act so no more, or if you are resolved on a moonlight scene, let it be Lady Randolph and Douglas, not Romeo and Juliet, it will be more in character for both of us.” I was still kneeling, and still held her dress; I was touched by her resentment, but her pride excited my own—“You know all now, I am reckless of the consequences; you may drive me from you, you may despise me, but you never can take from me the recollection of this hour, the daring hour when I knelt to you, and told you I loved.” She was withdrawing her dress from my grasp, “Ah! pardon me: I know not what I say; do with me what you will, my heart, my existence, are in

your hands, break or destroy them, or cherish them as you will; I don't ask for pardon; I know not what I say." "Very likely, but as it is necessary for one of us to know what we are doing, I know I shall quit this retreat immediately." This moment appeared to me decisive. I was intoxicated with love, and fear, and shame. If she went, and went in anger, I saw little that remained to me, but despair. "Stay with me, only stay with me, and I will but gaze on, but worship you."—"Worship the moon rather, it is there lost wits are preserved, and I wish you a good journey on the next post-griffin." This cold and ludicrous contempt overcame me: I loosed my hold, the tears rushed from my eyes, the burning tears of passion and shame. "That you should reject me I could bear, but to heap with contempt one whose youth you have blasted, whose heart you will break---you have made life hateful to me; I only knelt,

and to kneel to you deserved despair.”—
She paused, she was touched, I felt it
from her altered respiration. “Can this
be possible? Mr. Bethel are you serious,
and sober?”—“Are life and death serious?”
—“Why then seriously rise and listen to
me, for I can talk seriously. Your con-
duct, or misconduct, bitterly reproaches
me with my own. From the levity of
my manners you have inferred the levity
of my heart. Many like you may have
been mistaken, and many the mistake
may have made wretched. Great G—d!
what a life has mine been, a life of error
and deception, and levity, and wretched-
ness! I thought the whole world con-
tained not a heart, the whole world
thought so of me. I repaid their insen-
sibility with insensibility; yet I have an
heart, a broken and contrite heart, this night.”

She paused, she struggled to resume
her levity. “No one has ever seen
Lady Montrevor by moon-light or candle-

light in her natural colours before : no one deserved to see her. They who could mistake her never shall hear me justified. I will carry the anguish of a proud heart to the grave : there it is bringing me fast, and not a soul will weep upon my grave, no heart will ache for, no tongue pity me ; so much the better ; I only asked for admiration, and that I will have till death. The vain, selfish wretches, with whom it has been my curse to live, thought that admiration was all I required ; it was all I asked, because I knew that affection they had not to give, or, not to me.

“ But I am talking of myself when you wish me to talk of you ; I believe your tears, I believe your sensibility, but the language of feeling is so new to me, and the language of fashionable insult so common, that I confounded them. If I could think I had not, I never could bear to see you again. A young libertine is an horrid thing, almost as bad as an old one.” I

attempted to speak. "I will not be interrupted; as you value my esteem, which perhaps is more valuable than some people think, never speak, never think of this again. Platonics are dangerous things, especially between young men and married women. I am a miserable wife, that I cannot help: I am a faultless one, that I can. If you will prove yourself worthy of my regard, you may, by cultivating your own, by suppressing a romantic fancy. I am no object of passion"—her voice failed—"but no one ever shall know that. They who can be imposed on by the glare of manner, deserve to be imposed on. If they had the eyes of a mole they might see through it my misery, and my contempt for them; yet if I died to-night the world would pronounce me the happiest of women—I am the most miserable: I am a meteor, all glare and mischief; I might have been a fixed star, my light benignant, and my place in Heaven,

now"—Her eyes were fixed on a point, and her voice became hollow; I could contain my fondness and sorrow no longer: "And you will, you will be a star in Heaven, and among the brightest there."

"If ever we get there," said she, with a melancholy smile, "it will not be by saying fine things to each other, so we had better say true ones; I speak sincerely; if you have an heart, reserve it for some deserving object, for days of honorable and quiet happiness. I expect no pleasure from life, yet to see you happy and distinguished would certainly give me a sensation very remote from pain.

"If my good wishes can contribute to your happiness, you are welcome to them; my advice perhaps may be of more service to you—but remember the conditions." I attempted to kiss the hand she had not withdrawn—"No, no," said she, laughing, "that is not in the bond. This scene has left me fit for nothing but dropping

the curtain, so you may tell every one that you saw me retire to my room; and now 'to dancing with what appetite you may.' She waved her hand for me to leave her: I could not disobey. As I crossed the gallery I met Lord M.—he again regretted my not dancing with such perfect equality of tone, that nothing but time could discover. He had been listening at the entrance of the recess for the last half-hour—I thought not of him. The remainder of the night was passed in protecting Sybilla from the annoyances of the loungers, who, repelled by something they did not like in my eyes or manner, amused themselves by again assailing the orange-tree, and sticking the leaves they tore from it on a patent lamp, which at length they overturned, and then laughed and lounged to the supper-room.

I will say nothing of the feelings with which I was occupied till I next beheld her; my intention is simply to relate facts,

and let feelings be inferred from them ; yet I fear that long after the language of her high and melancholy feelings had ceased to sound in my ears, the effect of her sight, her touch in solitude, remained. By what means her repugnance to the canvassing plan had been overcome I cannot conceive : I never enquired, but in a few days Lord M. announced his intention of giving another entertainment, which, to accommodate his numerous friends, or as his numerous friends said, to save his splendid furniture, was to be given in the public rooms of the neighbouring town. Lady Montrevor with her daughter were to honor this fete with their presence, and the humbler starers were gratified by the expectation of seeing what it was the boast or lamentation of the country to have seen, or not to have seen.

I have mentioned the perpetual altercations between my father and Miss P. —they often appeared to me to resemble

the contentions of a man and wife, more than the relations in which they stood to each other, as the master of a family and a *gouvernante*. On this occasion they were uncommonly acrimonious. No creature could lead a more secluded life than Miss P.—she appeared perfectly content with studying in the morning, and wrangling in the evening; but no sooner was the public ball announced, than Miss P. declared her intention of accompanying us to it. My father opposed it strongly, but vainly; every effort at remonstrance drove Miss P. to reasoning, and her reasoning drove him out of the room. When the night arrived, Miss P. appeared prepared to accompany us. Her appearance I was little disposed to notice, till compelled to it by my father's fretful censures; I glanced my eye on her, and thought her dress perfectly simple and domestic. "I am sure you are dressed like nobody," said my father, peevishly. "Very likely,"

said Miss, with a vivacity which seemed borrowed from the occasion, "for you know we see nobody here." We set out; this detail of balls and dinners may perhaps surprize some readers: in Ireland we have little else to tell of. In all other countries I ever visited or read of, to entertain is sometimes the amusement of life—in Ireland it is constantly the business. The middle ranks of life enter into the contest of dissipation with a vain and emulous spirit of expence, of which there is in England no resemblance. But there is always a balance for the defects of society—our commoners are like nobles, and our nobles like commoners. It was an eventful night to me, yet I had no presages but of pleasure. Though the disclosure of my wild passion had produced little consequence, yet I was rejoiced that it was disclosed; I thought I should see something of mutual intelligence, something that recalled our communication—

something that told me of the time when I held her hand, and knelt before her, and she listened with a countenance 'more in sorrow than in anger.'

The room was full when we arrived. My first care was to seat Miss P. who professed she had only come there to collect and exercise new ideas, "for, as Mr. Godwin declares" said she, "that an intellectual person can digest sagacious reasonings, and plan works for the benefit of mankind in the crowd of a street, it will be equally easy and useful for me to meditate in a ball-room." I assented to her reasoning; I would have assented to any thing at the moment. The Montrevor family entered the room; his lordship entered first, bowing on every side with all the humility of a Roman candidate: Miss Montolieu followed, looking pale and timid, and fastidious; 'and with them came a third of regal port.' No words can describe the majesty of appearance she had assumed

on this night: whether to gratify her own pride or her lord's, all the jewels of the Montrevor family blazed in her dress, and all its pride towered on her forehead; she was again the mother of ambassadors and warriors, and the mother-in-law of statesmen and senators; there was no flutter of levity, no glare of gay wit about her; she walked slowly to the head of the room, declined dancing, and seemed content to sit and be gazed at by the assembly. Lord M.'s pride, though it had compelled his wife and daughter to appear in the assembly, would not suffer them to dance or mix in it. Miss M. therefore was stationed by her mother; the latter appeared like a captive queen following the train of her conqueror with sullen and reluctant state, the former like a little trembling prisoner shrinking from the procession she decorated. The loungers and I, and a few more, had formed a kind of guard of honor about the ladies, but the

former were soon dismissed. They attempted to draw her out by laughing at some of the dancers. "I am not up to ridicule to-night," said Lady Montrevor; "if I attempt to shoot in the bow, the poisoned arrow will fall on myself or you, so go now and dance, I know ye are excessively fond of dancing, or go look in your dictionaries for the story of Philoctetes."

They strolled away, not knowing whether to be offended or not, but agreeing that the dancing-room was a damned bad lounge, and that they would try to get a set, with the help of Lord M. and the old one (as they called my father,) whom they allowed to be damned dashing better. The rest of the guard of honor were occupied by Miss M. who only listened to them with languid monosyllables and wandering eyes. Where her eyes were wandering I could not discover, my own were fixed on but one object.—

“Badinage is thrown away upon those people,” said Lady M. to me; “I am thrown away upon them, but admire my knowledge of human nature. I knew the good people of this country would not believe their senses if I appeared among them like a rational creature—an English peeress, and a woman of fashion, a rational creature, impossible! it would be quite unreasonable, quite out of nature, to have any thing natural about me. Besides, I have always observed, that when people’s expectations are excited to observe follies, sooner than be disappointed they will give you credit for every vice in human nature, or below it, so I preferred playing the fool to playing the devil—that is, being thought to do so. My *robe de chambre*, my late appearance, *mon tout* was only a tub to the whale, and the monster seems diverted by it. I say all this because I would not have you think me the ridiculous being I must have appeared to every one else.”

I tried to thank her condescension, but dared not trust myself with words like softness: I prized her penetration with a good conscience, and admitted that nothing could escape it. "No, nothing; I can see every thing, except my own faults. I thought proper, for instance to-night, to appear in a public character, very dull and *diplomatique*, as you see. As it is all acting with me, the oftener I change my part the more I amuse the world, and myself. This Roman-matron costume would be tolerable if I had any jewels to embellish it, except those in my hair."—"You have a thousand," said I, ardently. "Have you discovered a diamond-mine on the estate," said she, laughing. "No, it is all personal property, all your own—beauty, rank, talents, virtues, children."—"Some of them," said she, pursuing the metaphor, "are false, and some of them unfashionable wear." I tried to check her despondency; "No," said she, "no,

there is a tide in the affairs of women as well as of men, which if once passed by—it has passed by with me; my time and my powers are gone; I can be nothing now but a warning, a beacon to tell of danger; yet while I last, I must blaze; no one shall see me decline, till I disappear for ever. I have assumed my part, no matter whether voluntarily or not, and I must go through with it, and I will go through with it; a full theatre and loud applause for me till the curtain drops, and the farce or tragedy ends. Besides, if I retreated now, they would call it cowardice, not virtue; no one would believe it real, the fictitious character was so well supported.” “What matter for their opinion or their applause,” I spoke with energy; the necessity of suppressing my voice seemed to give me a kind of inward force; I told her what she might be; I told her of one whose advice, whose example might yet make her a wonder to the world and

herself. I spoke of Mr. Corbett, of his piety so exalting, of his life so conciliating, of a life lived on earth, yet 'commercing with the skies.' "This is all extraordinary enough," said she, "I wish I could see him; but, no, it is too late." "It is not too late," said I, fervently, "I will pledge my soul it is not too late, he will tell you it is not too late; see him—only see him."

"Oh no, I have seen enough of parsons, I have seen my lord's chaplains; they all drest the character so well, and acted it so ill, that I"—"But now you will see a Christian." "Well, if your Christian eats or drinks, bring him to dinner next Sunday, but tell him, *entre nous*, not to be too long saying grace, for my lord can digest any thing better than that at dinner. Now, as you can suppose me converted to all intents and purposes, you may, or must go, dance, for we have whispered, and which is, worse, been seen to whisper,

too long." I turned away to request some insipid girl to make me happy with her hand, when Miss M. whom I was passing, faintly articulated "again—this is too much," and fainted. Her fall was so sudden and helpless, that she actually fell into my arms. Lady M. flew to assist her; she recovered rapidly; Deloraine had rushed from the dance to support her; she opened her eyes, shrunk from him, and grasped me earnestly. Lady M. had detached a small essence-bottle from a chain on her neck, and sent Deloraine for water, with an agitation that became her more than any thing she had ever assumed.—Deloraine returned, but apparently repelled by Miss M.'s repugnance to his assistance, gave the water to me, and retired. Miss M. complained of the heat and the crowd, and the room, and every thing she could think of. "We shall go home, my dear," said Lady M. who looked thoughtful, "I believe my lord and the

company may spare us the remainder of the performance ; I have sat here till I am tired, and you have sat till you fainted, and that is all that can be expected from us." " I wish I had not come," said Miss M. languidly. " I wish you had not, and I wish your ladyship had not," said Sir John, advancing to us with a foolish face of consequence : " by a most extraordinary liberty which some gentleman has taken, you have been introduced into company extremely unfit for you. There is a female in the room who is Mr. Bethel's mistress, who was Lord Roschamp's, who was any one's. Lord Montrevor has ordered the carriage, allow me to attend your ladyship and Miss Montolieu to it." The groupe looked aghast—I was thunder-struck. " What have you said, sir—what have you dared to say—my mistress ?" " Your's, sir, or your father's, or both, perhaps." Lady M. with a face of horror and resentment, gave her hand to Sir John.

The sight drove me mad. I seized Sir John's arm. "Lady Montrevor may retire, but you shall not, till you have explained or retracted this falsehood."—"Falsehood," said the baronet, his lips growing white—"yes, falsehood; I have no mistress—my father has no mistress, or if he has, she cannot be here. Lady Montrevor, look not so indignantly on me—it is a falsehood, by heaven." "Damme, you little impertinent puppy, it is well for you the ladies are present, or"—"I renounce their protection; you fly to it yourself, because you need it; retract your words this moment." "Oh! for mercy, for heaven's sake, forbear," said Lady M. "Mr. Deloraine call my lord, or pacify these madmen, or let Miss Montolieu and me escape." As she spoke, Sir John had lifted up his cane: I struck it from his hand, and stretched him on the ground with a blow. He was considerably my senior: he was more than twice my

age, and an experienced pugilist; but my limbs, though singularly slight, were muscular, and my stature so much superior to his, that I felt shame at the violence I had exercised, and stooped to raise him. Lady M. withdrawing her train, on part of which he had fallen, retreated with Deloraine and Miss M. The whole room was now in confusion.

Hammond, who had been dancing with Sybilla, and had quitted the dance to defend Miss P. from the persecutions of Lord Roschamp, now joined forces with me to protect both the women from the ridicule and insults of the room, and we effected a retreat just as Lord Roschamp and Sir John were telling of the "damned famous hoax of old Bethel sending his cast-off mistress to matrimonize his son and daughter at an assembly of people of fashion; at least, where we were, damme, that knew her in London, and knew her here too, damme, in spite of her prim

dress, and philosophical jargon; damme, it is the most famous blow, the most famous blow, by Heavens, in the world. That big boy will be whipt, and the girl locked up for suffering me to quiz my old acquaintance Sally Percival. Damme, I knew her as well as the pavè in Bond-Street." We returned home in perfect silence, only broken by Sybilla's sobs. Miss P. attempted to speak; I adjured her to be silent; I believe I stamped; I know my voice failed as I spoke; whether my vehemence or my grief moved her—she was silent. We arrived at Lemon-grove. My father was sitting up, and Masseur was reading Voltaire's *Pucelle* to him. He started at seeing us enter. Sybilla was weeping, and I was like a maniac. He demanded "What was all this for?" I could not answer him, yet a torrent of words was on my lips. I took Miss P.'s hand; I led her to him; I fixed my dry and flashing eyes on him. My look asked

but one question. I could say no more; my voice was choaked; my lips were parched with passion. My father appeared to shrink from me; I threw Miss P.'s hand from me; and taking Sybilla with me, left the room without uttering a word.

I led Sybilla to her room in silence; I felt as if it was my duty to watch her steps; at her door she threw her arms round my neck, and wept on it from shame and fear. Shame affected me differently; I hardly could bear to look in her innocent face, after it had appeared as the public companion of an harlot's, and in the presence of Lady Montrevor. I raised my head indignantly, wiped her tears from my burning cheek, and rushed into my own room, where I sat unable to sleep, yet unable to bear the thoughts which kept me awake. I had never inquired for my mother; I had heard that my father had many mistresses; that they were

dead; and I hoped she was dead among them: but now the domestic habits of Miss P. and my father, the authority she assumed, and the influence she exercised over him and us—I grew sick with thought. My heart was an affectionate one, but it was not made to love vice; I knew I was the child of shame, but how horrid to be the witness, the contented and domestic partaker of parental shame! At length I slept; but my dreams were full of the preceding night. At a late hour in the morning I heard a rap at my door. I had determined not to go down to breakfast; and I desired the person to enter in no very inviting tone. It was Deloraine; I was glad to see him; I wished for counsel, for I felt all the fluctuation of youth. Deloraine spoke promptly and decisively. “This is a dreadful situation,” said he, “I could hardly think your father would have exposed you to it. He deserves to have the whole consequences of it fall

on himself. This Miss Percival, this woman whom he has made his daughter's governess, and the inmate of his house, has been his mistress, has been a woman of the most shame fullife. Lord Roschamp knew her too well; it cannot be denied, but you are perfectly innocent; you have nothing to say, or to do in the business." I fixed my eyes on him—"If that is all, if she be but his mistress, I will buckler her against a million. If I have nothing to do in this business, if she is no more than my father's mistress, she shall be defended or dismissed, or—all shall be well. I will excuse her, or fight for her, or any thing my father and the world may demand. But I ask one question more of you, Deloraine. I ask it solemnly, seriously, as a man of honor, as a son; remember your own parents, you know what I would ask—Oh G—d, I see anguish and shame in your face, I am undone, she is mine and Sybilla's mother." I dashed

myself on the bed ; I felt almost suffocated ; I wished I were. I will not, I need not, detail my shame and sorrow. I could have loved a mother, could have knelt for her blessing, and wept on her honored hand—and that mother was an harlot, branded by the insulting and public recognition of the man I hated and defied, and in the affronted presence of the woman to shield whom from insult I would have shed my blood, and from whose presence the event had probably banished me for ever.

From this shock no being could suffer so much as myself. I was young, with all the innocence, and ignorance, and pride of youth ; I knew not how the world palliated those matters, I cared not how. Female infamy was loathsome to me ; I felt blistered and leprous with its contamination ; I could have said with Desdemona, “ It loaths me now that I do speak the name ; to do

the act that might the addition earn, not the whole world should bribe me."

I will not dwell upon this hateful period. Deloraine inflamed my resentment, and confirmed my resolution. He told me there must be a duel, but that I was scandalized for ever if I engaged in it. "Let him," said he, "who has humbled and degraded and injured you by his vices, be exposed himself to the danger of their consequences. There will be a duel, but let your father be the combatant. You must forgive me, Ormsby, but I never could regard as a friend or a gentleman a man whose life was staked for the defence of vice—a mere blusterer in a brothel. It is not impossible but this unhappy affair may be concealed even from Lady Montrevor's knowledge, if you don't act an ostensible part in it; but if you do, the secret must be disclosed, for who but a relation, who but a son would buckler the purity of his father's mistress against a million? Take my advice, I have seen

more of the world : as I value your character and your happiness, I charge you not to fight. Your father will not, perhaps, send a challenge, or if he does, it will not, perhaps, be accepted. He is an invalid, and not young ; for you no allowance can be made on either account ; if you move in this business you are known, and if you are known you are undone. A man entangled in such a quarrel at the beginning of life, will never extricate himself from its consequences till its conclusion. Come with me ; we will not stay here ; we will not be seen here ; and when we return, all will be tranquil."

I was miserable and feverous ; I knew not what to do ; I was ready to accept an omen from the right or left. I was struck with Deloraine's representation because it was the first I heard, and because it promised that all might yet be concealed from Lady M. I would have sacrificed the world to hide my shame from her. I did more—I

sacrificed myself. I went out with him, but soon drove him from me; for I could not bear to hear the very terms in which any allusion was made to the subject, and I thought his face, the face of one known to me, reproached me with the shame of my mother. It is easy to wander in solitude in Ireland; I strayed through field and fen, a long, dark, winter's day, drenched by rain, and parched froze by the wind, yet nothing could extinguish the burning of my cheek, or cool my dry and cleaving lips.

All day I wandered without meeting a creature whom I knew, or who knew me. Towards evening, I saw approaching me a figure resembling Mr. Corbett's. He was the last man in the world I could have borne to meet. I flew from him, and hid myself in a cottage. It was night when I ventured to return home. There was something in my return, in its hesitation and concealment, that struck me with a

sense of guilt, and a presage of evil which I could not repel. My very step, slow and faltering, was like that of a criminal; the waving of the leafless trees, and the moaning melancholy wind, seemed to murmur to me reproaches and woe. I stopt in the shrubbery; I looked towards the house; it was all dark and silent. I would have given any thing for a sight of the meanest domestic in it, for the sound of his voice, for a light twinkling in one of the windows: I waited in vain, there was neither sound nor light. I could stay no longer in my concealment, my mind was feverous and fantastic; I began to mistake the audible throbbing of my heart for the respiration of some one near me whom I could not see. I rushed from my concealment; I heard the feet of horses in the avenue; I shrunk into it again. The surgeon rode past me. I knew him; he had attended me when I was wounded in the arm. I grew sick; I wished a bullet

in my brain or my heart. I was faint with famine and weariness; I staggered in an attempt to follow him, and fell senseless. I suppose I was found by the servant who was attending him; but I recollect nothing till I found myself in my own room. Masseur was near me. I could not ask him a question; it was unnecessary; a Frenchman seldom waits to be questioned. He poured out upon me without mercy the whole intelligence: that my father had sent for me in the morning to send a challenge to Lord Roschamp; as to Sir John Orberry, he thought being knocked down was enough for him; that his astonishment at finding I had disappeared was beyond all description; but the business could not be delayed; he was determined to fight himself, *selon les regles de vieille cour*. They met: Lord Roschamp and he were both slightly wounded; but whether from agitation of mind, or motion, he had burst a blood-vessel, and was in the utmost danger.

I will not insult any man by telling what I felt. My first impulse was to fly to my father's room. Masseur attempted to hold me. I would not be held. Oh that I had thus contended with Deloraine! I knew all I had to encounter. My father was irritable and vindictive; and he was, besides, so immersed in the modes of his former life, that he could assign but one motive for declining a duel, and could have but one feeling and name for the man who could dare to decline it. I knew all this; yet nothing could keep me from his dying bed—the bed where I had laid him. I rushed to his door; it was shut against me; I heard something like a tumult within; I attempted again to enter: the door was but partially shut, yet it was not open enough to admit me. I thought no humiliation too low for the moment; I put in my hand at the door; I fell on my knees; I tried to supplicate; my voice was choaked. He appeared to

hear me—"Is he here?" said he, in a voice of inconceivable bitterness.—I answered only with a cry of despair and desperation.—"Drive him away, I cannot die in peace if a coward be suffered near me; drive him from the door—does he wait for my curse? He shall have it when I recover my breath—Oh this damned suffocation." "Oh, do not curse me," I groaned, I sobbed. "By God in Heaven I am no coward, no deserter of my parents: I will pursue Lord Roschamp to the ends of the earth; he or I shall perish to appease you. I will pour out my blood if it will stop the flowing of yours: only do not curse me. I had not a moment to think, or I would have died ten thousand deaths before this; you placed me on a precipice: if I fell from it do not revile me, do not curse me, it is horrible to die cursing, it is horrible to live with a parent's curse." He attempted to speak. I heard his throat rattle. I blessed heaven it was not

his curse I heard; I had crawled into the room on my knees; I implored Sybilla, who was praying beside the bed, to pray for me, to intercede with him for me. My head grew giddy. I fell—but I have heard that he did not curse me as he died. I remember nothing but that they all swam in blood before me.

I did not recover perfect recollection for some days: when I did, I exerted myself vigorously to shake off my despair: I determined not to be a coward in mind. I looked around me; the fair land of youth and life was a desert. I never expected to recover the blow I had received, I never wished to recover it; the imputation of cowardice in youth, the blasting of my feelings and of my character by one fatal instance of defection, admitted in a moment of hurry and weakness, I submitted to with a gloomy resignation that bore and braved its shame without wincing. I wished not to hear of consolation, to com-

promise with misfortune or disgrace, to accept of remnants of clandestine and fugitive and worthless happiness; all happiness was beneath me. I took shelter in one line of resolution; I determined never to plead for my vindication; in pleading there might be deceit, there must be weakness and degradation. I resolved if the world ever lamented its injustice to me, it should only lament it over my early grave. I roused myself to act, and look those around me in the face, like a man who could retrieve himself by a word; the thought of the world's contempt had little in it that was terrible to me, but had 'all my hairs been words,' I would have compromised for the contempt of all to avoid that of one being—who that being was I need not say. My weak, violent, boyish conduct on that fatal night, she might have forgiven: but what woman can bear even a suspected coward?

I summoned Mr. Corbett, and one or

two others of the most respectable persons in the neighbourhood. I announced my intention of opening my father's will; and till this was arranged, I refused to see Sybilla, or my mother, or even Hammond. I had applied to my uncle; I expected his answer. I was proud of it; my own resolution had anticipated its purport. I knew the high and haughty spirit of the Milesian, who never brooked an insult, and who knew but one way of avenging it. My uncle had fought several duels, it was the habit of his country, his age, his profession. He could make no allowance; he had no perception for any other mode of expressing resentment, or adjusting differences between men. It was the principle of the Milesian, it was the habit of the soldier. I say this merely to exculpate his heart from a sanguinary or vindictive feeling; it was the gentlest that ever beat within an human breast. Yet, with this heart, my uncle

wrote to renounce all connexion with, all knowledge of me for ever, as one who had disgraced his family, and blasted his youth with eternal infamy, infamy never attached to an Irishman, the infamy of declining a duel, or declining the opportunity of a duel. "But I thank Heaven," the letter concluded, "you never bore the name of De Lacy." The lines were written with a trembling hand, and these quiverings of humanity and affection were a consolation, which my heart, chilled and rigid as it was, could not decline. The day arrived; every place was searched for the will; Masseur, Miss Percival, every one that knew my father or his habits, assisted in the search: no will could be discovered. In his cabinet were only found some lines versified from some obscure French poet against the immortality of the soul.

When all search was allowed to be in vain, I addressed those who had employed themselves in it; I told them that I was perfectly acquainted with my late father's

intentions in regard to the disposal of his property ; that a circumstance had occurred which made property, or possession of any earthly thing, of little avail to me. My voice failed, but I extended a paper, entirely resigning my share of the property to Miss Percival and my sister, which I desired to be divided equally between them, in addition to the respective shares which the law would entitle a wife and daughter to in default of a will. This disposition, I was sufficiently confident, Sybilla (who was now the lawful heir) would not dispute in relation to her mother, and I requested the witnesses of my declaration to sign and attest it as a legal and valid instrument. I tore myself from remonstrances, and inquiries, and amazement, and (Sybilla's) tears ; it was not my object to have my resolution praised, or canvassed, or deprecated.

I shut myself up in my room, and thanked Heaven, like Jaffier, that I was not worth a

ducat. I had determined to be alone, for there are frames of mind of which you dread the effect to be suspended by the sound of any voice but your own ; but I had hardly retired when Deloraine broke into my room per-force, and cursed his officiousness, and deplored my obstinacy, and actually shed tears with such violence of honest grief, that afraid of being softened, and ashamed of being consoled, I swore that the next allusion to the subject would drive me from the house to shelter myself in the grotto, or in the river that flowed beneath it. He was at length pacified, and then endeavoured to find out something of my future purposes of life. I preserved an utter silence, or answered only in monosyllables. I was proud of my secret, and wished, by my present tenacity, to compensate for my past and fatal flexibility. When he found I was neither to be soothed by kindness, or assisted by advice, he rose to depart, and

again, with a vehemence of affectionate grief, supplicated my pardon for the injury he had done me. "Deloraine," said I, "you have done me no injury: to advise me to act as a man of honor and a gentleman, as a man whose feelings instructed him to act

Beyond the fixed and settled rules
Of honor in the fencing schools,

was no injury, but an honor and a kindness; the consequences to me have been what the world would call unfortunate; but nothing can be a misfortune to a man which does not deprive him of his intellect or of his probity; yet at the age of seventeen, friendless and fortuneless as I am, this stern philosophy is so little the natural complexion of my mind, that I dare not listen to the voice of a friend, I dare not trust myself to hear a sound that would sorten me. I require to be 'settled and bent up'—I feel I require it much—

Heaven knows what may befall me, it knows my heart—its only purpose is to wrest justice for myself from the world, to be remembered when I am gone with respect, perhaps with regret. The means are all indifferent to me—means are always so to a determined mind, yet, that my determination may not be shaken, you must leave me, D——, and you must see me no more. By heaven I cannot bear the sight of any thing I have ever loved, while the mark of shame is on my forehead still.”

The very tone of my voice had acquired energy from the harsh and wayward scenes I had lately been hurried through. Deloraine retired sadly. I would not suffer myself to think of his kindness, yet there was a silent and unfelt consolation in it that I could not prevent from creeping about my heart; at all events I was consoled by the thought that my misfortune had restored him to the Chieftain's

favor, and fortune, who now openly declared that his next adopted heir should be a soldier.

Few men of my age, dashed at the opening of my life from opulence, or the expectation of fortune, to actual and abject penury, ever felt so little disposed to contemplate or comment on their fall. I was occupied by other feelings—‘my reputation, my reputation’—I could have groaned with Cassio. A thousand wild projects were in my head. When Marshal Schwerin threw his standard among the troops of the enemy, and determined to die before the eyes of the sovereign who suspected his courage or his fidelity, he did not feel the alternative, the qu’il mourut impulse more strongly than I did that night, when leaning my head against the window, as the passing clouds chequered the reflection on the floor with pale and fitful wanderings. I thought of her whose thought came on my mind like the moon from behind a dark

and stormy cloud, and dreamt that she might sigh when she heard of my being a fugitive and wanderer on the face of the earth ; that she might regret I was compelled to seek hardship, and peril, and pain ; that she might yet shed a tear over the grave of one who died because he would not be all unworthy of her. I would have dreamt thus till morning, had not Sybilla rushed weeping into the room with a letter in her hand from my mother who had just quitted Lemon-Grove. Of Sybilla I had not yet thought : I felt at Lemon-Grove, with its present mistress, she must not stay ; but this letter anticipated all my debates about her—I read it with difficulty, my eyes were dim and burning ; it talked in the jargon which I execrated with more fervency than ever, of the freedom of the human will, and independence of human agency, and the necessity of consulting the general good in opposition to what were called domestic and proximate feelings ; of her having felt

within herself 'the capacity of increasing the happiness of an human being,' and that this capacity might not be unemployed, that she had retired from Lemon-Grove with M. Masseau (with all the personal property they could collect) without the appellation or restraint of that odious and degrading monopoly called matrimony. All this was detailed in the cold physical style which writers of that school assume when they try to be profound without reasoning, and argumentative without logic, and sentimental without passion. I was used to this jargon; I understood it to be merely an apology for heads that cannot feel, a flimsy attempt to gloss over determined depravity by sophistry, to erect vice into a science and a system, and teach rampant and glaring corruption to assume the steady step, and talk the connected and consequential language of deliberate rectitude; like the day of the deification in Paris, which offered for the object of

worship a *harlot* in the costume of a *goddess*.

This letter almost drove me mad; it was a caustic in my fresh and burning wounds. The depravity of this unhappy woman seemed determined to persecute me through life and out of it—she is now dead, and I cannot speak of her with the bitterness of recent shame and sorrow. I wish to speak as little of her as possible—she was my mother; but I would only observe that her progress was perfectly accountable and obvious. She had lived many years in careless profligacy; in this state she had a temporary connection with my father, and bore him two children; the connection was afterwards dissolved; she lost her health. In the long hours of sickness and seclusion, the idea of reformation was obtruded on her, but she had no one to give stability to her purposes, or direction to her efforts. In this state of mind the writings of the

modern philosophers fell into her hands; she was delighted with a system that saved her the anguish of repentance, and the labour of reformation. Vice and virtue she learnt were merely habits acquired, not by a change of heart and principle, but of mode, rendered necessary, not by the will of Providence, and the interests of an immortal spirit, but by their tendency to the general good, and produced not by the auspicious agency of Heaven, but by the potent and plastic energies of man. Here she learned that to lament former depravity was foolish and unphilosophical, where reformation was so easy, where physical necessity, controlling all the actions, rendered vice no longer more culpable than voluntary, and where the exclusion of future responsibility deprived the mind of all solicitude for the event, even should its progress terminate in renewed vice. In this state of mind she again met my father, who hardly respiring

from the loss of his darling son, and viewing society with the spleen of a broken constitution, and a disappointed mind, proposed to Miss P. to retire to Ireland, and live in retirement with the children who yet survived, and who in the mean time had been educated at his expence. She consented, but in a manner characteristic of her opinions; she derided natural affection and parental ties, and determined to assume no influence, and avow no relation to us, but one merely abstract and intellectual; and asked, with ludicrous defiance, how the general good could be promoted by her being recognized as our mother?—Perhaps some lingerings of shame, which the new philosophy had not wholly extinguished, prevented her wishing to be known to her illegitimate children as their mother. Some such feeling, I am sure, operated with my father, when he consented to the plan of her becoming her daughter's governess; but whatever

the new school may teach, the habits of vice are not so easily exchanged for those of virtue. Miss P. grew weary of seclusion; she appeared in public, she was soon recognized, the consequences have been told. The barrier of public shame once surmounted, every succeeding step was easy; like the goblin in the tale, the brook once crossed, she assumed her former shape, and collecting all the property she could, she retired with Masseau, whom probably her money bribed to accompany her, and who intended to sustain the incumbrance no longer than he could remove her and himself to his native country. But this event suggested to me the necessity of speedy and vigorous resolution. I had at least learnt the importance and the habit of this from my late misfortune. Nothing teaches a man to think with more vigor than having an helpless and dependant female to think for.

Sybilla was left alone, and left to me: her father was dead, her mother was worse

than dead ; her wealth (for my father had left much more personal property than I imagined he possessed) was only a temptation, and her softness only an encouragement. The persons to whom Lemon-Grove had been disposed of, had given us notice to leave it. Her uncle's castle, only inhabited by men, and by men much averse from female habits, was no asylum for her. She had besides refused to enter it, since its gates were shut against me. The Montrevor family had requested her to pass some time with them : from the humanity of the invitation I was convinced it came from Lady M., and I urged her to accept it, while I pursued my inquiries after Miss P. and her wretched paramour.

With some difficulty I discovered from the servants that they had taken the direction to Lord Roschamp's, where, to my astonishment, I learned that Masseau intended to offer his services as his valet, till he had an opportunity of going to

France. There was an inveterate and menial depravity in this that stung me to the soul : fallen as she was, I determined to perish before I would see her living in Lord R.'s house as his valet's companion. From any other place I might have supplicated her to return, and spare her unhappy children's shame, but in this I was resolved no force should detain her : my spirit rose to defy him, a thousand vexations and insults burned on my cheek and in my heart.

I waited with impatience for morning ; when it arrived I desired Sybilla immediately to remove to Montrevor-House, and rode alone to Lord Roschamp's—I wished for neither attendant nor witness ; I knew I had but one part to act, and I determined to act that without the presence of any one who might be expected or impelled to assist me. The roughness and danger (if there was danger) of a single encounter, were better suited to my spirit at that mo-

ment—I entered the house—no one was at home—this was not improbable. I knew Lord R. had recovered the slight wound he had received, but my object was not to meet him only. I walked steadily up the hall; I caught a glimpse of Masseur's figure in a posture of observation at the upper end of it, I rushed forward and seized him in a moment; he resisted; the servants attempted to interpose: I could have grappled with Hercules at the moment; I shook my whip, it was loaded, and no contemptible weapon, and bid them beware of approaching me. I had not released my hold of Masseur—"Lead me this moment to Miss Percival." The spirit of his countrymen never forsook Masseur; he declared, with contorsions of face and figure which would have been ludicrous at any other time, that a lady who had accepted his attentions should never be betrayed by him to the resentment of her family; such treachery would neither be.

come l'homme galant, ni l'homme d'honneur. I was compelled to aggravate my resentment to conceal my laughter. I did not want to give way to ludicrous feelings, strongly as the object before me excited them ; it was no time, no subject for mirth. I shook the little reptile almost to pieces ; I foamed with fury, I swore I would be his death, his instant death, if he did not bring me to Miss P—" Villain, vermin, I did not come to talk with you, to touch you ; if you don't bring me where she is, I will spurn you round the house like a ball till I find her." But though I threatened, I could not hurt him, for I felt him quiver in my grasp, and saw his face grow white : he was old, and feeble, and diminutive. I did not want to hurt him or even to parley with him. He found I would not be parleyed with ; he threw open the door of a small room, from which he appeared to have crept on hearing me ; Miss P. was there ; she appeared

perplexed, and terrified, and abashed : I stept forward, I felt my spirits depressed, and my eyes growing dim—it was a sight of sorrow, and shame, and degradation. I could have wept and howled, and knelt to, and spurned her—my wretched mother—I choked the big and mingled feeling that swelled my throat : it helped me to repress it when I saw the sneering scoundrels that had followed me from the hall. I drove them fiercely away ; they were easily repelled ; they saw my eye was wild, and my motions desperate ; they did not wish to encounter me from mere curiosity. I went up to Miss Percival. I took her hand—“ You must leave this place—I wish not to say or do any thing harsh—but you must leave it—this is no place for my—my father’s ——.” The words stuck in my throat.—“ Come with me—there is much respect—much comfort for you yet in store.” My voice unconsciously grew softer—she looked feminine and frightened. “ I do not mean to talk

with you, but to act for you—you have been misled—trust to your son for the future—do not break his heart—do not blast his life and youth—I implore for mercy on yourself, on me, on Sybilla.”

I could not say more, I held her hand still, I drew her towards the door; Masseau stood trembling at it; I could not speak, I would not trust my voice with speaking, but I pointed to him. Hamlet pointing to the pictures was in my mind, and in her's too.

I led her into the hall, no one interrupted us, but as we entered the hall at one end, at the other entered Lord Roschamp, Sir John Orberry, and grooms, and dogs en suite. There was a pause, not on my side, for I led Miss Percival on.—“Why, what the devil is all this for?” said the peer. “Mr. Bethel, or whatever is your damned illegitimate name; what do you presume to come to my house for in this ruffianly manner, and steal out of it with whatever you can pilfer?”

I intended to have passed him without speaking, but he stood directly in my way, and the servants formed a kind of circle that confined me to a point. “My lord, it was neither my object to see nor to speak with you : this is not a time for trifling and verbal altercation ; my altercation with you shall neither be trifling nor verbal ; you are the object of my implacable contempt and aversion—I tell you so to your face—I am ready to prove it any and every way and every time—I only bear to stay in this country to prove it—I only bear to live to prove it.” Masseau interposed—“Ah, my lord, behold the most injured of men : this morning I thought myself as rich and as happy comme le diable, and to-day this terrible and impetuous boy (*ce garçon terrible et impetueux*) has carried off the lady with all l’argent which I had promised myself, pour consoler ma vie.”

It drove me mad to be be leaguered and compelled to plead with this slave ;

I turned on him, and said in French, with an oath that made me tremble, "As to you, Masseau, if you but offer to extend an hand, or look, or thought towards this lady, by —— there is not a bone in your body that I will not crush; I will trample you into dust, I will tread you to hell—slave of my father, dare you raise your eyes to the mother of his son!" Masseau fell on his knees; I turned towards the door; I was harassed and goaded; I felt that another provocation might be too much for me. "Damme if I understand this; damme if I understand at all, or will bear it," said Lord R.; "you come into my house, and you bully one of my servants, and you carry away another, and"—"Your domestic, my mother your domestic," I roared, foaming with passion; "unhappy and fallen as she is, I will make you kneel and ask her pardon for the word before I quit your house." "My domestic! aye, my domestic, or, if

you don't like that word, my wh--re." "Villain and liar," said I, striking him; he staggered with the blow, but instantly attempted to return it; the servants were between us, and I retreated a little to place Miss Percival out of the reach of hurt; the unhappy woman covering her face with her hands, sunk upon a seat.

Lord R. now came up vehemently, defying me to box him. "I spurn your vulgarity and your worthlessness; I am no bravo; I will fight you as a gentleman would a gentleman, you shall have every choice, every advantage, and damned be he that first cries "Hold, enough."—"Damme but you shall box me first—damme but you must box."—"Then damme but I will. I'll defy and annoy you any way; prepare yourself." He began to throw off his coat and waistcoat, and present himself in the usual costume of pugilists. I had thrown off my coat, but was told I must part with more. My

antagonist was flourishing his arms in the air; I felt shame and respect for my unhappy mother; my cheek glowed with something beside passion. I called out—"if there be a man among you, let him conduct that lady away, and take care of her; (Masseau don't approach her, remember what I told you) to her other insults it is not necessary to add the presence of half-naked men mangling each other with blows." This excited some commiseration for one of us; a decent looking old man took charge of her.

I don't want to repeat Lord R.'s vulgar defiance; he was a robust muscular man, about thirty, and expert in the only science he had ever studied. I was a mere boy to him, either in age or proficiency; his technical and well-planted blows covered my face with blood in a few minutes; the sight of it gave me the fury of a tiger; it was an unequal combat of skill and strength against a feeling which was almost more than mortal;

shame and rage were my right and left hands, and they fought for me. In a few minutes I stretched him on the ground with a blow which left him little inclination to renew the contest. I hurried on my clothes; I was sore and staggering, it had been a terrible encounter in point of corporeal disparity and suffering; but my feelings gave me artificial and vehement strength. I took Miss Percival from her protector, who attempted to wipe the blood from me with his handkerchief, but whom I repelled, for I wished for no kindness there. Sir John was helping up his friend, who said, in an earnest and painful tone,—
“Damme, Sir John, I don’t wonder at that young fellow’s dashing you to the floor in a moment.” “Oh, damme,” said Sir John, “where’s the use of mentioning that now.”

I was passing then with Miss Percival; the servants made a kind of confused movement of opposition, that said, “shall we detain them.” “No,

no damme," said their rude and insolent, but not unfeeling master; "He has fought for her like a gentleman, and let him have her; by G--d it is more than she's worth; damme I like the young fellow's spirit; I see it is no flash with him; he set-to like a gentleman, and by heaven's made some of the fairest blows I ever saw, felt I mean, in my life." Masseau was now ordered to get me some wine in a moment; they saw my pale and bloody face, and the feeble steps which I could not make firm; I rejected it in silence, but without any insolence of gesture. "Stay for a carriage at least," said Lord Roschamp, "my rascals will get you a carriage in a moment, Masseau order a carriage, you cannot take her away without one." I felt this, and paused, still holding her hand, I thought she pressed it at that moment. Masseau obeyed orders with probably the feeling of Haman when he accompanied Mordecai on his pompous

tour through Persepolis, or Suzar. I leaned my head against a pillar of the hall while the carriage was getting ready; when it was announced, I put Miss P. into it, and mounted my horse to attend her. I determined not to enter a vehicle of Lord R.'s; my determination however was vain; I grew dreadfully sick and giddy; my scars and bruises grew sore and burning; I was weary of the harsh and violent part I had been forced to act; I longed to be near my mother; I dismounted and got into the carriage. I leant my throbbing head on her shoulder; the tears forced their way through my closed eyelids; I wept like a child.

We arrived at Lemon-Grove; I attended my mother to her room; I was glad of the absence of Sybilla—I wished to speak to her without restraint, and without painful recollection; but I was too unwell to attempt it then. My mind and body were feverish and weak; my struggles had been no common

ones. I was compelled to throw myself on my bed, and there, to my astonishment, Sybilla appeared, with her tears and her tenderness, as usual. "Why are you not at Montrevor-House, Sybilla? I expected you to have been under the protection of that family in my absence."—She hesitated---she assigned twenty causes, and no reason. I thought of the stately and dazzling Lady Montrevor, and of Sybilla's timid gentleness, and recent sadness, and sought for no other reason.

I had now obtained something like satisfaction. The blow I had received was in some measure expiated, yet still I felt unmitigably a desire of perilous and sanguinary distinction, a pride of shame, an impatience of being known or even looked at till I filled an high and daring station which I was determined to reach or perish. My temper was much embittered; I had become jealous, and watchful, and fastidious. Some mischievous and mortal

struggle, an invasion, a battle, would have been a relief to me, where I might have rushed forward a Beltenebros, and recovered my name and knighthood, or buried it in blood for ever. This is not the raving of a romantic or ferocious mind: mine was neither, but it was young, ambitious, and dishonored. The wound I had received, like that in the Grecian fable, could only 'be cured by the weapon that inflicted it. I had not much leisure for meditation, my plan required none; it had been determined on from the time of my father's death. It was now suspended, however, by the intelligence that Miss Percival had again disappeared from Lemon-Grove; in what direction no one could discover, but it was supposed not unaccompanied, as Masseau had left Lord Roschamp's.

I did not give myself time to breathe my passion; I again mounted my horse, alone, and in silence, and traversed the

country for four days in every direction that afforded a chance of discovering them—all was in vain; it had been either so rapid or so secret, that I might as well have pursued the wind. I returned goaded, inflamed, exhausted, my mind burning with shame, and my frame with fatigue, disposed to contend with every thing, and with myself, to beard every man, and execrate every female I met. I returned to Lemon-grove, which we had only a few days longer to occupy; I had charged my sister on quitting it, to put herself immediately under Lady Montrevor's protection; I was again surprized, and even provoked, at finding her alone at Lemon grove. My notions in regard to women had now become fastidious in the extreme. I dreaded disgrace in another shape. Sybilla's gentleness failed to pacify me—I would not be pacified. I demanded, perhaps with too much harshness, the reason of her persisting in

this silent obstinacy. She was easily intimidated. She told me Mr. Hammond had forbid her, and her face grew crimson as she spoke. "Mr. Hammond forbid you, on what pretext? by what authority? when did he see you? what right had he? what opportunity had he to dictate to you?" "Oh! don't be angry with me, dear, dear Ormsby; you look so wild and so weary, it terrifies me to see you; don't speak harshly to me; your kindness is enough to make me disclose my heart and all within it to you, but I feared to add to your vexation." "You are adding to it, adding to it intolerably. Sybilla, I don't want to be harsh to you; I am worn and weary, you see I am, don't hang on me in this manner, I cannot bear it, I cannot bear much more, and from you, Sybilla."—"Oh! heaven," said the weeping girl, clinging to me, "if you shed a tear, it will break my heart: I deserve to have it broke if you shed one. Oh! my

darling brother, so brave and gentle, so manly and young, I would kiss the dust under your feet to pacify you. It was the folly of a weak woman to conceal a woman's folly from you. Mr. Hammond (young Mr. Hammond) was so good as to come here when I was alone. He spoke of Lady M. He said she was a woman of fashion, too much a woman of fashion for me. He told me it would be better for me to stay here till you returned; and he spoke so earnestly, so—I am sure he loves—you; and I thought you could not be displeased at my taking the advice of one who—"Of one who, when I required advice, when advice might have saved me, never offered it, but stole to mislead a weak girl in my absence."—"Ormsby, I am not so weak. I would not have adopted Mr. Hammond's opinion if it had not been first my own. He would have advised you if you would have suffered him, but you drove him

from your door, which he staid at an hour in vain, in hopes of being admitted to you."

I was provoked and wearied beyond my strength: I was provoked at being reproached with my obstinacy to Hammond. His advice might have benefited me, if I would have listened to it.—Weariness and anguish, and contradiction, and fear of aggravated shame, and the suspicion which recent suffering teaches, stimulated me to a false and and impotent strength. I mistook mere severity for decision. I thought hasty measures and precipitate resentment were necessary for every future occasion. I told her indignantly that Mr. Hammond must be indebted for his justification to his own eloquence, not to her's, and with this bitter hint I quitted her. I heeded not her tears, nor her supplications, though she clung to me, and knelt, and promised to tell me all. I was insensible to her anguish: it seemed a tribute to my own firmness of

mind, and I pleased myself with exerting an unnatural and tyrannical violence over her feelings and my own. She saw me depart with despair; she sunk from the sofa on the ground, wringing her hands, and calling me "Cruel," with a voice choked with sobs.

I was not cruel, but I was assuming an appearance of it from which my heart recoiled. I tried to believe that circumstances made it necessary, and to perform it without shrinking. I was like a defeated general, sullen and sad, and stern, till the opportunity of recovered honor. But at that moment I was actually delirious with incessant provocation and fatigue; my wanderings, my disappointment, the shame of my mother, the fear of my sister operating on a frame slight and sanguine, festering with heat, and giddy with sleepless fatigue, had made me as wild and irritable, "as sudden and quick in quarrel," as if every being

who met me was the man who had injured me.

It was night when I got to Hammond's. I hate to tell of broils and quarrels, at least of those in which I behaved in a manner so senseless and savage. I was shewn into a room filled with company: male-company drinking after dinner, most of them officers quartered in Eyre-court. I declined a seat, I declined drinking, I declined speaking; I declined speaking apart with Hammond, which he proposed when he saw me look wild and inflamed. I began by inquiring, in a voice of constrained mildness, his reasons for visiting at Lemon-grove; but my eyes flashed, my voice became hoarse and broken, I supplied the want of matter-of accusation by vehemence and noise. I poured out reproaches and revilings on him; I upbraided him as the cause of added shame and sorrow to an unhappy family, as the

despoiler of the unprotected, as one who tried to sink the fallen still lower. By this weak violence I exposed my sister; I cared not, provided I could expose him. Hammond attempted to answer me; I interrupted him. I hated his cool and steady manner; I thought it an insult on my irritation and my unhappiness; I urged him, by contradiction and reproach, into passion; I delighted myself with a conquest over his calmness. We both became outrageous. I had elevated myself almost to madness by the sound of my own voice. I denied and derided his most solemn and earnest assertions. I told him there was but one way of justifying himself, and that if he declined that way, it was fear and falsehood that prompted him. Hammond's father and the officers now interfered; they declared that my language had left him but one way to justify himself, whether guilty or not. Hammond struggled for a moment with his prin-

ciples ; it was a short and painful moment. He told me he was ready to justify himself. All the company (but himself) were partially intoxicated ; they could not have been more highly regaled than with the scene before them ; there was a general roar of mad bravery and Bacchanalian joy. Hammond's father swore he would not stir from the room till he saw his son behave like a gentleman.

Pistols were easily procured. The room was nearly forty feet in length.—Some one adjusted the distance. I cared not what it was : I cared not if it was muzzle to muzzle ; my only wish was to be thought brave by madmen, and to perish. To such a state can ' the world's dread laugh urge a young mind, that lives in a vicious fear of false shame.' I only remember when the gentleman who loaded my pistol gave it to me, I determined mentally if I killed the only man (except Mr. Corbett) whom I loved on earth, to load it again, and turn its contents on

myself. We fired: I missed. Hammond fired his pistol from the window, and demanded if I was satisfied. The whole room answered in the affirmative. I loudly exclaimed, "No, I have fired at you, I will not be satisfied till you have returned the fire fairly and directly: I did not stand here to see you fire from a window."

The company now interposed, and informed me that the laws of combat were completely fulfilled: that I had a right, if I insisted on it, to fire again myself, but no right to force another to fire at me. Hammond demanded if I chose to avail myself of my right. The question, the circumstances, were too much for me: my head grew giddy: I uttered, faintly, "I am no coward," and recollect nothing further till I saw Hammond beside me, bathing my temples with water. When he perceived me recovering, he said in a firm tone, "I have complied with Mr. Bethel's request, it is therefore fair he should comply

with mine; I request his presence alone for half an hour." The company retired to another room, and renewed their drinking, the father insisting that his son should be the first toast. "Damme," said he, "if I thought that man or woman could make Gorges act in so devilish spirited a style."

When we were alone, I sought no longer to restrain myself: my heart seemed to return to its own place; I threw myself on him—"Hammond! Hammond! thank G—d you are safe! Hammond, I would rather have died, I would have died if I had injured you." "Bethel," said he, calmly, "if you had killed me, you would have killed the husband of your sister." He paused a moment. "It is terrible to speak of the depravity of a parent." I groaned inwardly. "This is no roof to place my wife under; there is no protector, no parent for her here; I have no means of maintaining her independently,

For my father's circumstances are much involved. I could not endure to see my father distressed: I joined him in a mortgage of the principal part of the property which my consent was necessary to dispose of. He is relieved, but I am impoverished, nor have I any longer a right to call on him for the allowance of an eldest son, suitable to circumstances that no longer exist: I did not take him from the hands of his creditors to make him suffer by mine. I loved Sybilla, I trembled for her: she was in a situation the most dangerous to principle, and to female delicacy. Your father was an avowed libertine, a scoffer at religion, and a voluptuary in habit, and Miss P."—"Hammond," said I, "these are subjects which your narrative must spare me." "I speak of them not to wound you, but to justify myself: I will be justified. I have not acted lightly. I supplied Sybilla with books, I directed her studies, I endea-

voured to preserve the balance of her mind on the side of rectitude: had that been lost, had her mind imbibed the shade of her circumstances, as a Christian I would have compassionated, as a man I must have loved her, but never would I have wedded her. You will smile at my expressions of passion perhaps. Her name went up with every prayer I uttered; but I felt something more than even this was necessary. A female mind, destitute of that stern stability which is the necessary aid of virtue, much assaulted and endangered, requires direct authority, and positive and present influence. This could only be attained by marrying her: I married her to secure her happiness and my own. My purpose was, when I had bound her by a tie equally urgent on her principles and affections, to go to the English bar, to maintain myself there on the most moderate allowance, apply myself diligently and vigorously to my pro-

fession, and while my father applied himself to retrenchment at home, by our efforts, unequal as they might be, to obtain a subsistence for Sybilla, not extorted from the wants of a most careless, but most affectionate parent, and an home to which I should no longer blush to introduce my wife.

This was my plan, but this you have frustrated. Your precipitate (I will call it by no harsh term) mention of Sybilla's name among a number of strangers and men, has left me no choice in regard to my immediate and public declaration of our marriage. The name of my wife must not be uttered in the same breath with doubt or dishonor: she shall be no more suspected than the wife of Cæsar. Whatever be the inconveniencies pecuniary or otherwise which menace me, I shall publicly declare her my wife, receive her to my arms if I have no home to receive her, and labour at my profession

till I have extricated myself from the difficulties, which, though they encumber, do not depress me, for I have endeavoured to act with rectitude, and the consequences of such actions can bring nothing formidable with them."

How inferior did I appear to this noble and upright young man! the creature of passion, chaff which the breath of every impulse chased and scattered, who consulted nothing but his heart, and whose heart, too, often led him astray! I again supplicated his pardon with childish importunity; I knew not what to say, or how to praise or sooth him. "My dear Ormsby, it is I who should supplicate your pardon. He who deviates from established principles, he who suffers the great rule of life to be interrupted by accident, he it is who has erred, and it is he who should ask forgiveness. When I showed you the despicable and depressing spectacle of a Christian shrinking from the laugh of fools, and the frown of the world,

and daring to violate his conscience, and lower the high standard of duty in the eyes of those before whom he should uphold it; when I showed you the spectacle of a Christian either shamed or scared into fighting a duel, I became the aggressor, and I require your forgiveness; I am humbled when I think of my weakness, for the courage of the world is the cowardice of a Christian."

I was content he should be thus exalted both in principle and in feeling above me; his virtue was the best security for the happiness of those he was connected with. But I was delighted to think that there was still a solid foundation for temporal comfort of which he was ignorant: I hastened to inform him of it. I told him, in my father's desk had been found notes to the amount of six thousand pounds, about eight hundred had been applied to the payment of his debts, (I concealed Miss Percival's having taken three hundred more.) the remainder, I

told him, was fairly and lawfully his wife's fortune, the interest of which would at least maintain him without indigence at the Temple. I was proceeding to evade his inquiries about myself by talking of comfort and happiness, when I saw Hammond's face shaded by incredulity. I paused: there was a question in my silence—He answered it. "There are some subjects you have forbid me to speak of, but you must suffer me to allude to them. A person who was in Tullamore (about twenty-two miles off) three days past, met there a man, who was evidently a foreigner, attempting to get change for large notes, none of them less than £300. He had a great number of them in his hand; he offered them, in his distress, to every one near him; the man, who is my father's shepherd, looked over them in the stranger's hand, they were indorsed L. B. your father's initials. I will make no comments—I fear the stranger was Masseau—

I fear you or Sybilla have been plundered."

This last blow, this combination of vice and cruelty, almost distracted me. I would not believe it till I returned to Lemon-Grove, which I prepared to do instantly. Hammond forced me to swallow some wine, and accompanied me. When Sybilla saw us return together, she fainted; I wished her insensibility to continue till I found myself mistaken. The first thing that struck me was the evident traces of violence on the lock of my father's door; I went in; all was dark and silent; I trod lightly and fearfully over the floor, with other feelings than those of recent solicitude. It was past midnight; I was in the room of my dead father; the wind was wild and high, and sobbed around the building in the tones of an human voice in anguish. I held the light low; the desk was in its usual place; I opened it; in one corner of it was a box where I had depo-

sited the notes in presence of Mr. Corbett, my uncle's agent, &c. &c. I saw paper lying at the bottom; my heart beat with delight; it justified my wretched mother in a moment. I examined the papers; they were two debentures for £100 each. Sybilla's whole fortune was reduced to this. They had pillaged her of every thing else; they had left her with the bare means of subsistence if she were not the wife of the most honorable of men; they had left her in a state that might have tempted indigence to resign her to shame and destitution. I hung in moody misery over this discovery; the light fell from my hand; Hammond rushed in, for he thought I had fallen. I did not seek to conceal it from him. I pointed to the empty box; but I could not bring myself to utter my mother's name in a voice of rage and bitterness: the voice of the moment. Sybilla entered timidly; she knew not what had passed; I looked at him with a face of appeal and agony. He answered it like

himself, without the weak medium of words. He took his wife in his arms, and kissed her with the pure and honorable kiss of affection, that was pledged to love and honor and cherish her. I was answered.

We sat up the remainder of the night; I listened to them talking of their plans, and revolved my own in silence. From a stock comparatively large, I might have condescended to borrow for an immediate exigency; I might have suffered the wealthy heiress to equip me for my expedition; but to live on the scanty pittance of an indigent sister; to resume my own gift—the idea, even in silence, oppressed my breath, and tinged my cheek with fire. I determined to be first “steeped in poverty to th’ very lips.” I determined that in preference “I would try to dig, and to beg would not be ashamed.” After some deliberation, Hammond determined to remove his wife to an aunt’s, who lived at some distance, a respectable woman,

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whose society was decorous, if not desirable. They then pressed, with jealous importunity, to learn my plans ; I devised something like a plausible scheme, and turned aside to conceal the tear their affection wrung from me. I no longer opposed Hammond's repugnance to Sybilla's residing at Montrevor-House ; I had no longer any right to oppose it, and my pride recoiling from the idea of the haughty family extending their protection to my impoverished sister, completely took part with his judgment.

Women have more penetration than men. Hammond departed, satisfied with my arrangements and his own. But Sybilla was not deceived ; she hung upon me with the melancholy fondness of one who knew I had concealed my purpose, and that purpose was to leave her. In the morning a note arrived from Lady M. pressing, in polite, but not solicitous terms, her removal to Montrevor-House. Sybilla left the room

to answer it in the negative. I was examining some papers relating to the mortgage of Lemon-grove, which we were to give up the following week, but the temptation of lines traced by that hand withdrew my eye; they were the last that I should probably see of her. I took up the note which Sybilla had left; I was alone. I kissed it; as I examined the beautiful characters, I perceived the lines were uncommonly wide; it suggested a wild thought. I had read of letters written illegibly without the assistance of fire. I held it to the fire in hope and fear: other characters appeared. How I devoured these words: "A friend of Mr. Bethel's is much concerned at the late unhappy circumstance of the family; she has heard much that she laments, and much that she refuses to believe; she entreats Mr. Bethel not to adopt, in future, the wild and farouche conduct he has done. She is not acquainted with the circumstances enough

to advise him particularly, but requests him to consult his heart less and his safety more, if he values his own happiness—if he values her's, which will be much diminished by any disastrous event befalling him. She fears he has some intention of quitting the country; should he require Fortunatus's gifts for his adventure, the fairy Good-will can supply him, if he will attend the spot which she visits by moonlight in Montrevor-Park." Precious, precious lines! I locked the door with childish jealousy to read them undisturbed. I poured over them the first warm and gracious tears that had refreshed my seared eyes for many days. To gain the sympathy, the solicitude of an human being, however remote, however interesting, is balm to the wounds, and down to the weariness of a vexed and struggling spirit; but to be thought of by her, whose thought had never quitted me, to have the heart of feeling beat, the cheek of beauty pale for

me, I could, at that moment, have borne, have dared any thing. To a man not conscious of pusillanimity, the thought of a beautiful woman gives more than the courage of nerve or constitution: to a man not humbled by vice, the regard of a beautiful woman gives resistless freedom and animation. I could not believe myself resigned to evil, while an angel hovered over me, shedding light on my path, and hope on my heart.

I resigned myself to dreams of felicity and honor: see her I dared not, for I dreaded that it might look like a consent to pecuniary obligation at which she had hinted; I dreaded that her fears might prevent my quitting the country; above all I dreaded that she might know I was rushing into a world of hardship and adventure, friendless, unaided, unknown. I resolved she should never know it. I shrunk from the weakness of complaint, the degradation of assistance; yet to acknowledge my destitution would

be like complaint, like supplicating assistance; and if I saw her, it would be impossible to conceal that of all the children of peril and adventure, I was the most destitute.

There might be something romantic in this, but it was with me the age of romance, and the events in which I had been lately engaged had given an high and fastidious tone to my feelings. I was not formed for disgrace. I had been disgraced, but the very writhings of my impatience had contributed to shake off the burden. I was proud of my struggles; I was proud of my misfortunes. I would not have been an atom less destitute if I might. But I did not expose my destitution; I hid it under my pride and shame, and an inward promise of a day of distinction.

I wrote to Lady M. I blush to think of what I wrote: it was childish and proud and fantastic. "The person whom Lady M. has honored by her notice, will never claim it till he has deserved it. He

was not formed for shame or for obscurity. We do not live in an age of romance ; but it is still possible to acquire distinction by toil and danger, or if disappointed, it is easy to die. If I am remembered, it shall not be by shame, by the weakness of youth, or the madness of passion. Think no more of me. I am not worth a thought ; if ever I shall be, it will be from the impulse caught from your parting wish. He can hardly be deemed unfortunate who has obtained what will arm him for the struggle of life, or soothe him in the hour of death."

When I had folded this, and requested Sybilla to send with it her note, as being of the same purport, I felt my mind firmer than it had been for some time past. I determined not to eat my sister's bread another day : I had so little preparation to make, that the night which was approaching seemed as welcome and obvious as any other opportunity. When I bid Sybilla farewell for the night, I tried

to prevent my voice faltering, in vain; but she was weary and heavy with many days of sorrow, and did not perceive it. I was glad of it: it was no moment for softness. If I had resisted Lady M. why should I yield to human being?

I sat up in my room till all was still. I then mounted my horse, whom I had saddled in the evening with my own hands, and escaped unobserved. I will not mention my plan, it was too wild for sober contempt. I will not even mention my finances, it would make my narrative appear like fiction.

I had not proceeded far, when I saw a figure approaching me; the moon shone faintly at intervals; I tried to avoid him: it was in vain. The road was direct, and he came on expeditiously. Breathless with expectation, I perceived it was Mr. Corbett; I attempted to rush past him; he recognized me with a shout of joy; he seized my bridle: I could not repel him with violence, yet I was half distracted

by this discovery and delay. "Mr. Corbett, you must pardon me, I cannot be detained; this delay is distracting, and impossible, and"—He could hardly say "I am faint and spent; I wish I may have breath to tell my message, it is of such consequence, of such joy."

He was breathless, his hold was weak, I snatched my bridle from him—"No news can be of any joy, of any consequence to me: I am a forgotten man; I adjure you never to acknowledge you saw me." I broke from him, and spurred my horse. Between weakness and supplication he fell to the ground: he called after me; I would not hear him; this discovery was so like a vile collusion, a plan to be brought back, and consoled and prevailed on to stay; the thought gave me wings, yet still I heard his voice at intervals: it pierced my heart. "Oh! don't be cruel to your weary, affectionate old friend, who has wandered so many dark, lone miles." In the pauses

of the I wind, I thought I heard him mention my uncle, and twice I heard him say "You are cruel to yourself--to yourself;"--but I was soon beyond all reproaches but my own. This incident had compelled me to change my direction: I turned from Montrevor-House, from which lights twinkled through the trees. The last look at the walls which inclosed her, the lingering near her window while light lingered there, the guessing at a shadow, and blessing the spot where its last trace had disappeared, all that I had fed parting love and melancholy with, was now impossible.

In this direction I was again encountered by a figure which was moving rapidly in the road before me. I trusted to the darkness of the night to conceal me, but it could not conceal it from me. It was the remarkable figure I have before mentioned, the inhabitant of the solitary tower. I had heard wild tales of him: I heard that he

wandered about the country all night, like some unhallowed and restless thing. His appearance seemed to realize all that could be told or imagined of him. It was with a strange and unknown sensation that I felt myself checked when I attempted to pass him. "Stop," said he, in a hollow tone, "I know you, and must speak with you: there is mischief doing to-night—there is perhaps scarce time to prevent it---follow me." "Where must I follow?" said I, "and what must I prevent?" "Murder!" said he, in a terrible voice. I shuddered. He appeared a being more ready to perpetrate than prevent a mischief. We were proceeding; I stopt---"I dread your appearance---I dread your language. This is a strange hour, and I feel myself disturbed by the sight of you: tell me what I am to do, or to expect if I follow you." I had checked my horse. He looked up, and half withdrew the covering from his face---"Are you willing to save the life of your uncle?" I involuntarily

spurred my horse. There was something about this strange being, that while it inspired terror, inspired confidence. He appeared to hold on his melancholy way through life, as he did when I met him, alone and in darkness, without a purpose of evil to any thing human, with nothing human in his purposes. I did feel my spirits quelled.

This strange and lonely greeting, the time, the place, the language he held, deepened the melancholy shade of my mind almost into terror, yet I prepared to follow him more passively under its influence. "You are mounted," said he: "all the speed I could make on foot might be fruitless; fly to the castle, and save your uncle's life." His last words relaxed the spell of terror which was creeping over me. There was an earnest impulse like humanity in his words, that dispersed all the visionary shadows that flitted round us. One strong feeling fought within me as I rushed along--to

enter those doors which I was told never to enter, and perhaps at the suggestion of a madman. But every thing vanished at the idea of my uncle's danger, for once I was not the victim of false and vicious shame.

The castle was about half a mile distant; that distance I had passed as a step. As long as I could see any thing, I saw the figure following me. All around the castle was still and quiet: I heard nothing but the sighing of the trees that waved to a pale, and wintry moon, and the croak of the raven from the shattered turrets. I crossed the court-yard; the dog, whom I remembered to be uncommonly fierce, did not stir. I was surprised at this, but as I passed him, I observed he lay motionless, and was wallowing in his blood. As I approached, no light appeared any where but in Father Cusack's window; it was a narrow Gothic casement. I saw the light streaming through a few stained compartments in it:

it was his oratory window ; the Chieftain had assigned him that apartment, because the window was coloured with the figure of his patron saint. His own apartment was just below the confessor's, but from that there was neither light nor sound.— The great door I found shut ; I was obliged to go round the building, to enter by another, which, communicating with the servants' apartments, was frequented by stranger, and traveller, and mendicant, and always open.

The passage was completely dark ; it ended in a narrow spiral staircase that led to my uncle's room. I ascended it lightly ; the perfect silence made me feel almost unwilling to proceed. There was no trace of danger or disturbance. As I paused at the arched door that led to my uncle's room, I began to feel shame at the passiveness with which I had undertaken this strange commission, and cast a glance of vacant inquiry into the room—it was large and dark ; the light

burning on a black marble table, scarcely showed the book and crucifix on it, and utterly failed to penetrate the recesses into which the extremities of the room were hollowed.

As I still looked, I thought a shadow seemed to be projected from one of them: it was the shadow of a man. I looked intently; it was withdrawn, as if it observed me; I withdrew too; it was the light of shadows. Our motions (if the figure had moved) were accompanied by no sound, and scarcely visible, as dim and flitting as the light that struggled faintly with the darkness around us; but in the next moment deception was impossible. The tall dark figure of a man visibly crossed the room, and stood by my uncle's bed. My breath forsook me. It was like the gliding of a spectre. I advanced into the room. The figure seemed to pause a moment, and then forcibly, but silently, threw itself on the bed. I heard my uncle

groan. I was beside him in a moment. He was scarce awake, and wholly unable to resist. The ruffian had grasped him by the throat with the force and fury of a fiend. The struggle must have terminated in a few moments. His face was black, and his eyes prominent, and his breath suspended already. I had no time for deliberation; I threw myself on the man; I seized him by the throat; I tried to drag him from his victim. The danger of suffocation made him relax his hold, but he turned on me in a moment. He had the strength of Hercules. He fastened on me with the fangs and fierceness of a tiger.--- By the quickness with which he turned he had completely the superiority. I had not consulted my own safety in the posture I had assumed when I threw myself on him—I was entangled in the curtains. I fell; he had me under him in a moment, one knee on my breast, his fingers half on my lips, half on my throat: his giant

limbs so twisted in mine, that I thought I felt my bones crushing with the weight and motions.

The struggle was now for life, but I had no means of struggling. I could not heave his enormous weight from me; his purpose was evidently to strangle me. It is an horrid termination of life.— I did not lose my faculties: I did not lose my horror of the death; I felt all its bitterness—the suppression of my breath, the labouring and convulsions of my chest, the bloody flashes that seemed to dart from my eyes, and lastly, every object of the night swimming before me, and every one with blood-streaked and glaring eyes that stared on me; and my tormentor changed into a fiend, whose bulk was like that of a mountain, whose talons were tipped with burning iron, and whose mouth and eyes breathed flames into mine—it was an horrible agony.

Long after I was rescued from him,

and felt that it was my uncle and Father Cusack who were holding my hands, and blessing, and thanking, and weeping over me, I still tried to twist myself from them, and still, though I knew their voices and their touch, I implored them to take their fingers from my throat.

It is difficult to tell of the confusion of joy and terror, and inquiry and wonder. I could hear or tell nothing distinctly.--- My uncle, though alive, was speechless, and unable to assist himself or me. Father Cusack, who was at his devotions, had been alarmed by the noise of my fall, and had hastened down. The ruffian, scared by steps and a light, sprung from me when he had almost accomplished his purpose, and escaped before the servants were roused to pursue him. The first object was to revive my uncle and me. I was convulsed and speechless. An hour had elapsed before either of us was restored to recollection, and every one thought rather

of alleviating the mischief, than inquiring how it had been caused. I could only answer my uncle's sobbing and passionate cries by faint pressures of the hand, when the stranger entered, and all the terrible scene of the night was explained.

It was a solemn time—the dark and ancient room in which the lights, brought in haste, burnt dimly; the shuddering listeners, who at every pause of the story threw their eyes round the room to discover was a murderer lurking in its shadow still—the voice of the stranger pouring out a wild and solemn stream of sound, not unlike the wind that at its intervals moaned round the old castle. I never recollect listening to a narrative with more awe and anxiety; it was not merely local; my struggles had been terrible, and my deliverance extraordinary. He spoke in a singular and solemn manner. I cannot now retain the peculiarities of his language, but I perfectly recollect his narrative.

He said he had been visiting an aged female who was lying sick near the castle. He was in the habit of frequently affording her relief, but when he called on her the preceding evening, he found her almost dead with anxiety and apparent fear. She motioned that she had something extraordinary to communicate. He made a child who attended her quit the cabin.— She laid her cold hand on him—“ I was just sending the gossoon for you : life could not leave me till I saw you, or somebody who could be sensible of what I have to tell. The De Lacy is to be murdered to-night, but God spoke first, and kept the breath in me to save his blessed life.

“ You know my grand-daughter that married that cursed bastard of Murtagh's. She told me there was something bad in his heart this long time past, and what things he'd be saying in his sleep; and I bid her tell the priest, but she said it was all in vain, for he neither minded his priest nor his soul, and this evening, though he

never kept minding me these four years past, he came in all of a sudden, and asked where my son was. I said he was at the fair of Eyrecourt. "And," says he, "does he not always keep a musket in his place here?" "He does," says I, and then my heart misgave me, and a thought came across my heart like a flash of lightning, and I thought best to tell a lye for God's honor, and says I, "he lent it to my lord's game-keeper last week." "That's a lye," says he, "for I see it in the loft;" and with that, being a tall clever man, he reached up his hand, and took it out where it was in the thatch of the loft. I sat up in my bed: "Murtagh," says I, "listen to a dying woman; I know you have something black in your thoughts." "How do you know that?" says he, turning his back to me. "Oh," says I, "the dying always know the truth, for they don't look into this world, but into the other, and an innocent man would not

handle a gun as you are handling that now." "You fool," says he, "it is not this I want, but the thing off it to defend myself." He was unfixing the bayonet from the end of it; "Murtagh," says I, "if there's nothing bad in your heart, look me straight in the face." "To be sure I can," says he, still fixing himself with his back to me. "Do it then," says I, "while the turf is bright, and I can see you." He turned half round upon me; and, Oh Chr—st! his lips were whiter than any corpse, and the sweat was on his forehead as if he had been digging turf in the bog all day. I clapped my hands together this way; "Murtagh, Murtagh, there is murder in your face." "By hell it's a lye," says he, clapping up his hand, just as if he was wiping off the blood, "no one can see it in my face, for nothing's murder but killing a man with a weapon, and I'll strangle him in his bed, and they'll say he died in a fit."

I fell back in my bed; I felt as if all the hands in the world were on my

throat. "Oh," says I, "my child's husband will be hung for my murder, and I never will rest in my grave if I was buried in St. Kevin's bed, and had the holy stone laid over my head, and the pope himself to bless it." "I'll not be hung," says he; and then he up and told me how he was to escape, and by that I knew where he was to go, but I did not seem to know, because I was afraid of him, and I alone, and the gossoon in the cabin with me, and he did not know he had told me, for he was talking just like a man in his sleep, and his eyes all staring, and his nostrils so wide, he was like a working horse, and I praying to the Virgin to strengthen me. When he was gone, I was sending the gossoon to call you, and now I know the name of the man that set him on; and that never will I tell but to my priest, if he will give me absolution for all the mischief it will do when it is known; but as ever you think to go to glory, and as you fear the

curse of a dying woman, go and save the De Lacy's life, for if he dies to-night, my soul will never get rest." She fell back exhausted; it was late and dark, but the stranger immediately set forward for the castle, he met me on his progress: the rest has been told. The assassin escaped, and with him the name of his employer.

The Chieftain was utterly ignorant of his enemy: he declared he did not know that being on earth to whom he had given cause of hatred or revenge, and in the simplicity of his heart ascribed the attempt made on him to frenzy. "It was not one of my own people," said he, shaking his white locks, "that wished to take my life away; the father of that mis-begotten ruffian Murtagh was an Englishman, who was hung for robbery at Philipstown Assizes, and his son for pride took his mother's name. I much doubt if even her family was Milesian. No Irishman would lay his hand on the last of the De Lacys."

When he had sacrificed to his nationality, he sacrificed to his gratitude; he poured out a torrent of the eloquence of gratitude and affection. I still felt jealous and doubtful of my reception; I did not wish to owe the recovery of his favor to a mere casual act of humanity, which, under the same circumstances, might have been performed by a stranger.

He felt it all. He felt my broken words, my doubtful looks, my solicitude to be gone, though I was yet scarce able to stand from the violence of the struggle. "I know all that is passing in your heart, but set it at rest, it is not because you have saved an old and worthless life that I hang upon you this way, and swear that we never shall part more; no: my heart was never in its own place since I tried to thrust you of it. I went about those walls like a ghost, I wished they might fall on me, for I felt there was no one to come after me, no one with whom the name or

the spirit of my father's house would be retained or remembered. I forbade my people to speak of you, but the whole county talked of you; they said, when they did not think I heard them, that you had the heart of the De Lacys, aye, and the arm too; they said, any one that looked in your face might see your heart was breaking within you for your mother's shame, yet how bravely you bore it up, and put on a sad and manly countenance that made their hearts ache to look at you. My heart warmed to the thought of you, when I heard you had made yourself a beggar for your mother and sister, and the tears ran down my face though I thought I was hiding them. They were so pleasant to me that I would not deny them. But when I heard how you had knocked down that paltry English peer, and fought young Hammond for looking at your sister, I went to my oratory and kissed the cross upon it that you should have all

I have in the world; for it was not fear, but the high feeling and proud blood that I feel and have myself that made you decline to fight. So to lose no time, for your spirit was so high I did not know where it might drive you, I sent for your friend Mr. Corbett to tell you that the gates of my house were open to you, and that no man can shut them again no more than the gates of blessed St. Peter. Then my heart felt as light within me as if I was a boy again, or marching to my first engagement, or getting the first glimpse of my father's house after my wanderings were over. I lay down to rest, and little did I think that the first sight I should see would be you struggling to save the life of one who had disinherited and cast you off. My generous, gallant boy, so young and brave, that never murmured against my cruelty and injustice, but entered my doors to save the life of him who had shut them in your orphan face. The blood of

De Lacy is red on your cheek, the blood of De Lacy is warm in your heart, and while mine beats, every vein of it shall quicken to you as its joy and desire."

When we had leisure to observe indifferent things, Father Cusack remarked how providential my presence had been, as Delcraigne had been absent from the castle on a visit for the last week. He then, though it was not yet morning, declared his intention of visiting the dying woman, and learning the name, which she had refused to disclose but in confession. With him went the stranger, whom, when his tale was told, no importunities could detain even for a moment. He declined them, and the gratitude of the Chieftain, to whom his person was unknown, with a kind of sullen civility, a melancholy abstraction of mind that seemed to take no joy in any thing earthly, that paused from its dark progress but for a moment, and then renewed it in silence.

The remainder of the night was passed by the servants of the castle in raising the followers and tenantry to scour the country, and in examining the passages and doors of the castle through which he had probably entered unperceived in the evening, and concealed himself for an opportunity of murder: they were dark and winding, and the servants passed along them fearfully even by day. The Chieftain and I sat up the remainder of the night; overpowered by his affection, the sullen reserve which pride and shame and romantic distress had taught me, vanished. I told him all my wild purpose. I told him I was going as a private soldier, to recover the character of courage and spirit which, though I had lost, I felt I could not live without. His eye kindled while he listened. I told him I was going without friend or money or recommendation; among a people who knew nothing of me; who were unfavorable to strangers,

and among whom I expected to undergo all that could be suffered from ignorance and poverty and suspicion. He wept. But when I told him (as I told him the truth) that hardship and poverty and pain and labor severe to a youthful frame, and discipline hateful to a proud and fastidious mind, were all as the dust of the balance when weighed against the hope of acquired honor, or, at least of vindicated courage; that I could bear to fight in the ranks, that I could bear to perish in them, but could not bear to be thought a coward; when I told it to a mind congenial to my own, a high, romantic mind, on whose originality the world had not been suffered to encroach, in whom age could not extinguish the love of courage, and solitude and pride had fed the wildness of its spirit—he smote his old and trembling hands together, and in the language of a part of scripture with which all catholics are familiar, exclaimed “The L—rd do

so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

With the morning arrived the priest and Mr. Corbett: the sick woman was dead before the former had reached her cabin; the latter, who had received a commission from the Chieftain, had set out on it that eventful night; his affection would not suffer him to delay it till morning. He feared the wild and restless spirit that was working within me; he feared what the night might produce, after my shaking him off so roughly. He had proceeded to Lemon-Grove, to rouse the servants, and tell them the direction I had taken. There Sybilla's distress detained him till the intelligence of the night, which was dispersed over the country by the servants who were in chase of the ruffian, had reached and soothed them.

With the morning, too, came Deloraine, and Hammond, and Sybilla. In the face of the former, though unconscious of any wrong I had done him, I blushed to

look. The wavering favor of the Chieftain, the misery of a man suspended between vicissitudes of opulence and indigence, and plunged into the latter by a concurrence of accidents working in favor of one who appeared remote from all competition, touched me to the heart: yet when I raised my eyes to his face, I saw such a cheerful and unfeigned greeting there, an honest surprize without any exaggerated expression of joy, but neither darkened by suspicion nor malevolence, that I could hardly forgive myself for the injury I had done in suspecting such a mind of selfishness and reluctance.

That day and many days were devoted to domestic fondness so long interrupted, so marvellously renewed. Sybilla was the mistress of our little circle; Hammond had suspended his movements for a few days, that her absence might not diminish our joy, and my uncle appeared as well

pleased with his nephew as he could with one whose grandfather he remembered to have been an English settler, and steward to the gentleman whose property he had purchased. My uncle, my sister, Hammond, Deloraine, Mr. Corbett, whose tempered manner, and humble and monitory joy, threw a chaste and holy light over the warm groupe of love and triumph, and congratulating—what a circle—my heart, chased and wounded as it had been, expanded its plumage, and smoothed its down, and warmed its breast among them.

Two days past I was a wanderer, friendless and destitute, struggling for hopeless distinction, and desiring only to be justified and die. I was now the acknowledged heir of an ample fortune, surrounded by all that affection and liberality could procure; softened by affection, exalted by praise, my path strewn with wealth, and my prospects bright with distinction.

It would be absurd, it would be false to

represent myself as unmoved by this splendid vicissitude; I was not. I was almost giddy with my elevation, I looked down and saw in early youth, all that ambition toils for, and age reposes in, spread at my feet. With the ardour of youth I looked on my promised wealth only as the means of procuring happiness to those who needed or who valued it more.

I resolved to compensate largely to Deloraine for the injury I had done him. I resolved to assist the firm and proud-minded Hammond, and I debated by what expedient best to combine munificence with secrecy, and divest my benefactions of ostentation and invidiousness; but when I had scattered wealth and happiness around me, when in my mind's eye I saw every face flushed with joy, and every heart laughing with plenty, I first began to feel my own misery; my real and utter misery. For me there was no happiness; I had no partner to take by the hand; no companion to sit myself down un-

der my vine and fig-tree; no bosom to lean my head on, and whisper the secret of communicated happiness.

I was now almost eighteen; I had arrived at the age when it is impossible not to love: that I loved, I felt too well, but I did not dare to whisper to myself whom I loved. A romantic and unhappy passion unacknowledged, unexplored, and unextinguished, threw a sombrous and visionary hue upon all the colours of life. The bright hours of youth were sicklied over with the pale cast of love; yet still it was rich and lovely, and wild as the moonbeam stealing through a cloistered window, and tinging the haunt of solitude and melancholy with lights and forms more vivid and glorious than any thing reality could show—as the fairy light which the traveller follows for joy of its solitary beauty along the waste, and to the precipice. I knew the precipice I was approaching; yet still I told myself there was no danger, or if

there were, it was more than balanced by the pleasure. I tried to assume confidence in my own resolution; I tried to have confidence in Lady Montrevor; her dignity, her purity, her sudden change of voice and mind and character, her easy vindication of herself, her natural assumption of real and inherent virtue, all came to my mind, and along with all came her beauty. I struggled and debated, and at last wearied by a struggle, which showed me too much the weakness of my mind, determined it would be savage and ungrateful to quit the country without thanking the only one who had thought of me with compassion; that I must at least offer my thanks or the consideration with which she had honoured me, and if she to whom I was thus indebted was more beautiful than any thing I had ever beheld; it was no crime in her, nor in me, if I gazed on such beauty, when admitted into her presence.

The opportunity was not long delayed ; Lord Montrevor, the moment he heard of my restoration to my uncle's favor, drove his splendid equipage to the castle to express his sincere pleasure at the happy termination of the late events, &c. &c. &c. and ever attentive to forms, her ladyship's and Miss Montolieu's tickets came to visit my sister as Mrs. Hammond. Even this circumstance, as if " all the social powers had shed their influence o'er us," seemed to assume the most favourable auspices.

Hammond's father, whose fault was not indifference to women, and was captivated by Sybilla's softness, loudly declared his approbation of his son's choice, and swore no marriage ever prospered that there was not a duel or two about it. My uncle had announced his intention of giving an entertainment on declaring me his heir, to which even the English peers were to be invited ; but this was anticipated by an invitation from Montrevor-House. The

interval, till its acceptance, was a restless time with me—a time of reproach and congratulation, and hopes and fears. On the eve of it a circumstance occurred, that did not diminish my agitation.

There was a girl at the castle, whom I had often observed not mingling with the rest of the domestics, nor appearing to have any employment but that of sitting in one of the turrets and reading all day. She had all the beauty of youth and nature, a warm tinge on her cheek, and dark sunny eyes, and a wild animation of expression, such as health and spirits, and incultivated intelligence give to a face not “taught to look by rule.” I was interested by her appearance, and more by her studious habits. I inquired who she was; I learnt she was an illegitimate daughter of one of the chieftain’s younger brothers. This description of persons are usually employed as servants in the families to which they belong. The Chieftain, however,

had other notions of family pride, or female delicacy. I approached her with more respect, I inquired into her studies; I wished to learn the effect of books on a mind left so much to its own choice and direction. Her answers, in spite of the gaucherie of tone and manner, indicated a mind of no mean powers, wild and playful, and fantastic; but with something of delicate and ambitious and recherché, that marked the sex of her mind. A pursuit of fine and fastidious elegance, a pining for something which she had not yet found in the books or conversation she could procure; an aspiration after the beau ideal of a picturesque and plastic mind, made this forlorn girl appear to be more interesting than her beauty could have made her. Her style of books was wretched; some tawdry volumes of Romish lives and legends, some of the luscious poetry of Charles the Second's time, a great many plays, and no history, no biography, no

travels, &c. &c. I lent her some books, which Mr. C. had supplied me with, and of which I requested her to give me an account. I was anxious for her improvement—I knew not what I was doing—she was too grateful to her instructor. I was utterly unconscious that she preferred my company for any reason but that which made me choose her's. Vain men are easily persuaded that they are beloved; but I could not be vain, for what would have caused vanity to others, was only vexation of spirit to me.

My father, who had been eminent for personal advantages in his youth, was eminent for his jealousy of them in age, and any allusions to my rapid growth or my stature, were sure to tinge his mind with spleen for the rest of the day. When we went out he had always some pretext for recommending me to wear boots; I could not cross the room, or lean against the wall, or sit in any posture, without some

allusions to an Hercules Farnese, or an Apollo Belvedere; and at dinner I was always desired to remove my chair, and not amuse myself by contrasting those fine formed limbs, of which I was so vain, with limbs shrivelled by disease. This persecution, though it often made me feel as if I was seated on a chair of hot iron, had at least one beneficial tendency, no one could be more unconscious, or more contentedly so of advantages whose mention was always accompanied with pain. I say this merely to account for an insensibility which might otherwise appear unaccountable.

I dreamt not of any girl's falling in love with me because I spoke to her in a voice of softness and complacency, because I pitied her solitude, and because that solitude was uninterrupted but by me. There was another security for my indifference; I believe, from experience, I believe that nothing can exalt the mind more

above the ordinary solicitations of sense, than a concealed attachment to some object lofty and remote, like mine: something that renders the feelings fastidious by its exquisiteness, and purifies desire by its dignity.

Such was the state of my affections; and when my pupil would repeat to me passages from poetry I supplied her with, I never noticed her preference of the impassioned ones, nor the warm and speaking comment of her eye and her lip. On the night of my intended departure, she disappeared from the castle, and was four days after discovered returning voluntarily, silent, and dejected; she gave no account of her absence or its motives, and all notice of it was forgotten in more important things. Several days after, when my mind had respired from its late struggles, in passing through the castle, I saw her seated in the little turret, reading as usual, but not as usual blooming, and wild, and

warm: my heart smote me with the selfishness of my neglect; I went in; she was much altered, her hand shook as it held the book; she did not raise her head as I entered, but said in a low voice, "You have deserted me this long while, and I am glad of it." She inclined her head still more as she spoke; I took the hand that was hanging listlessly beside her; it was cold and damp; she tried to withdraw it; I saw a tear fall on the book at which, it was evident, she was not looking. "I have not deserted you, dearest Mary; I have been unpleasantly circumstanced; I have had much to struggle with, almost too much for me, but now"—She looked earnestly at me, and said—"Have you—I heard you had—Oh Chr-st! what hearts they had that could make you suffer—if it was such as me, they would have been welcome to it a thousand and a thousand times; but did you suffer much?" said she, her voice

growing tremulous with earnestness ;
“ not too much I hope, yet every one
praised you so and called you so brave
and noble-hearted, that I cried with
joy and grief to hear it: I love to hear of
a man so brave, so young.” “ If I am to
talk the language of truth, I will acknow-
ledge I suffered as much, almost as I
could well bear, but if,” and I tried to
smile, “ I am to speak the language you
love to read, I will say it is all overpaid
by your solicitude—your kindness.”—
“ Oh! do not, do not,” said she, shaking
her head mournfully, “ do not talk that
way to me any more ; do not speak that
soft, fine language to me, it breaks my
heart.” Her tears burst out, “ When I
think of you I try to think that you are
angry with me, and cross with me, and I
try to be so with you, and that helps me,
and I bear it better than—if it was in
reality at least.”

She continued to weep ; I was touched

and surprized ; I sat down by her ; my arm stole round her waist—"What is the meaning of these tears, of this language, Mary—I don't understand them ; how have I been so unhappy as to give you pain." "You don't understand—so much the better," said she, wiping her eyes, with a voice of firmness, "yet you would understand, or you would not be easy till you did, if the fine, great lady at Montrevor-House cried for you."

My eyes flashed at the name, the allusion ; my cheeks throbbed with the blood that rushed into them ; the arm that was round her trembled—she felt it. "Mary, I do not understand you ; if you felt compassion for one so unhappy as I have been, you should feel joy that I am no longer unhappy. Look up, Mary—dear Mary, why this sobbing ? this perverse holding down your head." "I will—I will, if you will promise to take your eyes from me, and not to call me dear Mary, not in that

voice, for that was the voice you spoke to me in—before—when.”

She paused for a moment, as if to recollect herself, then withdrew her hand from mine, and said sorrowfully, as if on some inward comparison, “I am a poor creature, ignorant, and all beneath you; I am no way fit for your company; my very hands are so red and hard, and yours are so white and warm, and soft, that I ought not to touch them.” “Dear Mary, what childish language. What matter for the texture of a man’s hands: if mine were delicate, they would soon have been hard and blistered enough with a musket. You must not speak to me as if I were a girl, or vain of girlish distinctions.” “I wish, I wish,” said she, and she checked herself. “What do wish, Mary?” “I wish you were a girl—no, I would not wish you were a girl either: I love too well to hear of your high spirit, and of your fighting, when it is over I mean, and you are safe; yet if

you were a girl, I would not wish you a bit altered—those eyes, and that white, white forehead, and those lips”—“and these whiskers,” said I, laughing. “I deserve to be laughed at,” said she, as if starting from a dream, “but I can’t bear it from you, yet,—I may come in time not to mind it—a little while ago, and I thought I would have died before I could bear what I did—and yet I did—and—Oh! my heart is an hard, hard thing, as hard as your own, but not the same way.”

No stupidity could misunderstand her, yet I could not quit her: I wished to stay by her, to soothe her, to give her all the mitigation of friendship and confidence. I hesitated, I knew not what to say; I was unable to approach; I was unwilling to quit her. I took up a book vacantly; I began to read some lines from “Blair’s Grave.” She was standing at the window with her back to me. “I love that poetry,” said she; “I repeat all the lines of it I can think

of when I walk alone, by myself at night."

"And where do you walk by yourself at night, Mary?" "Down by the ruined church yonder," said she, pointing to the ruins of a building which had once been a chapel attached to the castle, and which was still used as a place of interment.

"There I wander at night: not quite at night, but while I can see some light through the broken arch, and distinguish between the ash-tree and the pillars of the window; I love that light, and it does not make me afraid; and when I am tired, I sit on the De Lacy's mother's stone, and sing all the songs I can think of, and think of the time when I saw the priest and all the followers running after the last body that was buried there: and I think I am listening to the cry as it came along the moor; and I start, and it is the wind shaking the weeds on the wall above, and"

"My dear Mary, you should not expose your mind to these melancholy objects;

you dwell on them too much." "Melancholy," said she, "Oh, that is the only moment of joy for me. I'd give away every other hour of life for that one hour just about the time the sun goes down, and all in mist and rain: when I can but just see the castle, and this little turret that looks like my only home. I love the mist and the dimness. I would not like the broad summer light half so well, for then I would be seen, and be laughed at by all the servants." "The servants dare not, should not laugh at you, Mary: such a mind as yours shall never be persecuted out of its feelings; but let me warn you not to indulge yourself in this melancholy luxury; it may be a matter of mirth to the vulgar, but it will probably be a matter of dejection to you, and those who love you." "And who are they?" said she, with quickness. "No matter, no matter, I had better neither know, nor not know it; and you would not laugh at me if you

saw me there?" "No, I think I should rather weep," said I, for I was touched by this soft, wild melancholy. She trembled violently; she turned from me to conceal the flushing of her cheek, and then said, in a voice of forced strength and mirth, "Oh come, come, and see me there, and you will see me sitting on the tomb-stone, singing as merrily as any bird. Did you ever hear the birds sing in winter?" "I have sometimes heard a melancholy note from them like a farewell to the summer." "That is just like mine, only my heart is sadder than any bird's for the summer. And will you come? I will repeat that poetry for you, and I will sing all you can think of for you. I have no voice I know; it is very foolish of me to pretend it. They say the beautiful, grand lady at the castle, sings like an angel. But any thing of a winter's evening, in a church-yard, where we are alone, is sad and pleasant—will you come?"

I could not resist her importunity ; I promised I would. As I left the turret, she said, " If you should hear me talking to myself as you come, don't listen to me."

The day was a restless one to me. I believe there is no man with the feelings of one, to whom an innocent girl confesses her love for him, that does not feel pain from the discovery ; the difference of rank and habits, a thousand circumstances contending with affection and gratitude, make it almost impossible to act at once like a man of honor, and a man of feeling. That whole day I dared not repeat the name of Mary to myself ; every eye that I met seemed to read my mind ; the very consciousness of being loved gave a glow and a flutter to my frame, that would have been ridiculous in any one, but one who was told for the first time that a woman loved him. Few men retain either their modesty or their timid and boyish respect for females till my age. I had

both these qualities in most painful perfection, and a trembling inexperience of danger in what I was doing, that almost obstructed my breath as I reached the ruins. It was evening, the pale light that Mary loved: she was sitting on the tombstone; she was not singing, not a sound issued from her lips; she leaned her cheek upon one hand, the other, from which her book had dropped, hung listlessly among the weeds that sprung through the crevices of the stone; she pulled and scattered them to the wind. I had intended to speak to her—to speak to her tenderly and firmly, to reason with her if possible, and if not, at least to sooth her. I had strengthened my mind by the recollection of Hammond's example, and of Mr. Corbett's principles; I had in some measure collected my ideas; I had made something like a speech, but this sight scattered it. When I saw a sweet and innocent girl wasting with unhappy passion, becoming melancholy and pale, and wild,

haunting the house of the dead in her sadness, and almost like one of them herself, a gush of pity and sorrow filled my heart and my eyes; I sprung to her side, to her feet—"Mary, dear Mary, if you love me, overcome this melancholy, this dejection, it is destroying you, it is making me wretched; what can I do to vanish it? tell me, what I can do? and raise your head, and smile on me as you used to do." I spoke from my heart, and from the moment, at that moment, I would have thought no sacrifice too great to obtain tranquillity for her: to diffuse over her face one of the smiles with which it was lit in her happy hours of health and quiet. The action and the impulse were so unexpected, they must have surprized her; yet her mind was so intently pursuing the thought that occupied it, that she did not answer me, but herself. "Are you angry with me for reading plays?" "I am glad you have spirits to amuse yourself by

reading, my love, but there are few plays which I would recommend to you: they represent the passions in such exaggerated language." "Particularly love," said she; "they talk as if there was nothing but love in the world, and I believe there is very little—very little true love I am sure, don't you think so?" "I—I know nothing of love yet, Mary; we are too young for love." "But may'nt we speak of it?" "Certainly." "Well, then, do you think it possible that a woman could die for love, as the plays say? Here is a book which was borrowed from the servants at Montrevor-House, and it tells such a story of a poor girl, a poor ignorant humble girl, who went mad for love, and followed her cruel-hearted love for many a mile, and just came up when he was married, and a king, and great and miserable, for he had been fond of her when he was young, and not proud or high, and his heart smote him when he found his

neglect had killed her." She took up the book ; it was Miss Bailie's plays ; she turned to the tragedy of " Ethwald," and began to read some passages from it with the wildest vehemence of manner and voice. " See here what she says, poor Bertha, and yet, though he was cruel, she followed him—followed him, and knew him in spite of madness and sorrow—see what she says : ' I've seen thee on the gathering clouds of eve, ride with the stately spirits of the storm ; I've heard thy voice sound from the dark hill's side, and followed thee.' Yes, I followed you through night and darkness, when I heard you were going I followed you. I cannot speak like Bertha, but I have as true an heart, and I followed with love like her ; and if I could have met you, I would have begged to be your servant, and I would have served you with such true and humble love, no one should have reproached us, or said a poor girl could

not have an high heart. And when I heard you were come back, and in the castle again, though I felt it like the blow of death on my heart, I never shed a tear, or said a word; for though I would have kept near you in your distress, I shall never go near you now that you are the heir of the great De Lacy: and I came home again, and would tell no one why I went away, for fear it would bring shame to you."

Every word she uttered was (to use her own words) like a blow on my heart. I knew not what I said; coldness would have been a crime. I soothed, I kissed her: my tears fell warm on her cheek—"Mary, I am not worthy of this tenderness, repress it, for both our sakes; it tears me to pieces to think I can make no return, but this kiss; but these dangerous, dangerous indulgencies—Mary, spare me, let me go, let me die, but spare me your distress—your affection—they injure us, they may injure us beyond

reparation. I can make no return that they deserve, and,"—"No, no, I know you can make no return, no more than the king when Bertha came and found he was going to be married to a great princess." She laughed and wept bitterly. "When Bertha saw the princess on her wedding-day, sitting on a throne, and looking like a star in heaven, she says, 'thou art a fair dame, and a gay'—she was obliged to praise her beauty, but then she says she had such a proud and haughty look, and bids her take her eyes off her; that's just like me; many a day I watched on the road for her carriage, and watched—and watched till I was cold and shivering with the wind and rain, and still my heart burning within me like a coal of fire; and at last, when I saw her carriage coming, I fixed my eyes upon it till they were dim again looking for her, but when I saw her—blessed Virgin—she is the most beautiful creature the sun ever shone on: her

cheeks are like the first roses that blow in the garden ; and her sweet, proud smile, and her glorious look, oh ! she looked like a queen on her throne, and I could have shrunk into the turf I stood on, and I felt like a withered weed on it ; yet she has a proud look ; she would not tell her love I am sure to any man ; I am sure she could not love truly, nor patiently, nor hide a broken heart, if it pleased him she loved to break her heart ; no, she can make no return. That fine lady you follow ; and the princess in the play did not make the king happy though he forsook his first love to follow her ; but some men will not be warned."

Her words distracted me. It was the pride of my heart that its secret was unknown ; every man who loves truly is thus proud and afraid of his secret. Her name I never uttered myself : I could not bear that it should be uttered by ordinary mouths. An hint I could not have borne ; a jest I

could never have forgiven. Her image was mingled in my mind with every idea of dignity, and purity, and jealous trembling privacy; and all was disclosed to a jealousy which nothing could escape, and a vigilance to which love had given solicitude. I knew not what to say; I would not dishonour Lady M. by intreating her mercy—I would not dishonor myself by concealing the truth. I was proud of my feelings, though I trembled at their discovery. “Mary, you perplex, you distress me, by allusions which neither of us understand. I cannot be in love, where I cannot hope. I do not love Miss Montolieu; I ought not to love Lady Montrevor.” “Why?” said she, simply—“She is a married woman.” “And can none love but those who are married? I have heard my father was never married to my mother.” She was leading me to a dangerous explanation; but the feelings it awoke preserved me from danger. I

remembered my parents—she heard me groan—she saw my eyes roll in anguish—she felt what I felt—she threw herself on me with the penitence of a generous heart.

“ I am a foolish, wicked wretch, I know, to talk this way to you ; forgive me, forgive me ; but when you are humble and sad, you are nearer my heart. We are both destitute, and fatherless and motherless ; why can't we sit down and comfort each other ? I would not heed the whole world if I had you. I would have enough if we lived under these ruined walls for ever. But they will take you from me, and never, never love you as I do.”

She was sitting. I knelt beside her ; I pressed her cold wet cheek to mine ; I wiped away her tears ; I could only utter inarticulate sounds of soothing and affection.—“ This, this,” said she, in the softness of the moment, “ this is what ruined me. The first time you spoke to me with that soft, rich voice, was the last I ever knew

peace. I used to dance pleasantly in the hall of the castle, but after you touched my hand one day giving me a book, I could touch no one else's; after you spoke to me, all other voices were harsh; I could not bear to speak to my equals. I saw you walk here one night, I have walked here every night since. Oh! it is cruel, cruel for men to look at us, and to speak to us with such eyes and such voices, and faces like the faces of the angels in the pictures over the altar, and then, and then to leave us to cry our eyes away, while they are following those who never will care for them as we do." "It is very cruel, Mary, if they are guilty, if they are conscious of such cruelty." "Is it not a curse to have ever, ever met such a man?" said she, sobbing with unrepressed passion. "It is a curse," said I, struggling to withdraw myself from the madness of the moment. "Then stay with me and curse me," said she, hiding her head in my

breast, and pressing me to her. She was an orphan—under the roof of my benefactor. She loved me with a passion whose purity was inferior only to its force. I tore myself from her, and believed at the moment that the cutting off a right hand would have been less painful.

The traces of emotion were visible yet on my face, when we prepared to go the next day to Montrevor-House. Our party consisted of Hammond, his wife, Deloraine, and myself. I am ashamed to say that at this moment there was a coolness between me and Hammond. He had dwelt much and frequently on his reluctance to let his wife visit a woman of Lady M.'s character and manners, and his motives for such reluctance. Whenever he mentioned the subject, I had quitted the room; I could not hear her accused, and I could not defend her. The peculiar state of her mind, a state of high feelings and strong powers, unwillingly and un-

worthily abused, yet submitting to the abuse, despising the triumphs of vanity, and the applause of fools, yet living only for such triumph and applause, shaking in indignation and despair the chain that binds it to the world, and then pacifying itself by gilding over the fetters, whose "iron has entered into its soul." All this I could imagine, and could believe: Hammond could not, or would not. He abhorred vice; he was impatient of folly; he made no allowance; he had no compassion for the deviations of a mind that wanted nothing of virtue but stability, and had every thing to tempt it from stability. A woman who could be impelled to the disregard of domestic duties, a wife who could be indifferent to her husband, a mother who could neglect her children, whether hopeless of their affection, or outraged by their neglect or indifference, Hammond had no mercy for. When she was brought out in the circle of conversa-

tion, he was always ready to cast the first and weightiest stone at her. He had submitted, however, to this visit; for strongly aristocratic in his principles, he thought proper to shew himself pleased by the respect of his superiors. But all that had ever given me pain vanished as I approached the house—to see her, merely to be permitted to see her, I would almost have undergone all that had befallen me since I last saw her—but to hear her speak, and remember that she had spoken or thought of me with something like compassion, and something like regret, when the whole world had renounced me, to be permitted to remind her of it, to bless her for it—with my eyes, at least, to feel, whatever form her pride or her levity or her melancholy might assume before strangers, that her heart had once beat for me; to know this, and know it in her presence—I pronounced myself overpaid for all I had suffered, and forgot that the

pleasure which was to repay me was more dangerous than all the evils it was to balance.

I sprung lightly up the stair-case: most of the company had assembled in the principal drawing-room, where Lord M. surrounded by a group of wandering listeners, was informing them that nothing but his extreme impatience to express his satisfaction at the late happy events could induce him to have introduced his friends into rooms so wretchedly defective in accommodations. His friends, who saw around them nothing but splendor, chairs on which they were afraid to sit, and carpets on which they were unwilling to tread, received his apologies with some confusion. "No house can be habitable," pursued his lordship, "where the apartments are not arranged after Hope's exquisite system of decoration. Every thing there is appropriate, and *selon le costume*. I have just got the work from

London, and I purpose immediately to bring persons from England to arrange these rooms and furniture after his designs. Whatever flatters me with a longer stay among my Irish friends, and forms an additional attraction to their society, must be peculiarly gratifying even in speculation to Lady M. and me. This room, for instance, which commands a view of the Shannon, must be completely aquatic in its costume: draperies of pale green silk must be suspended from branches of coral and sea-weed, and wild water-flowers; a broad cornice shall be diversified with bull's heads, as the bull was formerly the emblem of a river, and urns, and Naiads; mirrors placed opposite the windows shall multiply the reflections of the water; the pedestal shall represent the fluctuation of waves on a silver ground, to intimate the sparkling sands of your native river; the chairs shall assume the form of shells and conches; the tables shall be of verde an-

tique, to harmonize with the complexion of the subject. I have a capital chimney-piece, representing the combat of Hercules and Achelous, in my dressing-room, which I shall remove here: every thing shall be quite in Hope's style."

His lordship had just reached the cieling in Hope's style, when our names, which had been repeated from the hall up the wide stair-case and gallery by twenty voices, reached his ear. He instantly turned; and dismissing shells, mirrors, and Naiads, received us with such flattering distinction, that all but myself forgot they had not yet seen Lady Montrevor. Through the spacious folding doors I saw her enter the adjoining room, in which some of the company were dispersed. They were females. She turned to speak to them. Her back was turned to me when I entered. Lord M. who had accompanied me, said, "Your ladyship has not heard Mr. Bethel's name announced, I believe."

"Impossible," said she, turning round, "impossible to live without hearing Mr. Bethel's name, or hearing any thing but his name. Mr. Bethel, you would have conferred eternal obligations on the country by giving them something to speak of, if you had given them any thing else to do but to praise. However, if silence can be eloquence in love, your friends and lovers have done you ample justice. As for me, nothing can make me silent but the want of language adequate to my feelings—a want which is the first I ever acknowledged with pleasure."

Let any man imagine himself assailed by such language from the lips he loves; language so rich with pride and pleasure; and her countenance so radiant with beauty and benignity, kindling into eloquence; every glance of her eye, every sound of her voice might have made an hero. My heart was filled with awe and animation, as if at the sound of a trumpet. I would

have knelt to her, I would have kissed her hand. Lord M.'s voice awoke me from a dream of madness and delight—"No one was more deeply impressed with a sense of Mr. B.'s distinguished conduct on the recent occasion than himself, but he knew that "on beauty's tongue dwelt accents pleasing to the brave and bold," and he consigned the pleasant office of eulogist to her ladyship."

The entrance of more company was useful to us all. As I mixed among them to pay my respects to Miss Montolieu, I was struck by the change in her appearance; always pale and pensive, she now resembled the princess in the fairy tales, whose heart was buried in a mountain of snow; so languid, so abstracted, she scarce seemed conscious of the words that stole, like the breathings of the Eolian harp, from her half-open lips, and the unmixed and bloodless whiteness of her skin painfully contrasted the rouge which, since she

appeared in company, she thought it *proprè* to assume.

It was late; and as only the Argand lamps on the chimney-pieces were lit, the groups that filled the room were indistinct; I hardly could believe my eyes when I saw among them Mr. Corbett. I confess the truth, I did not see him with pleasure. I had devoted my feelings to an indulgence which his presence checked and interrupted. I was ashamed he should witness, I was afraid he would discover it. I was in a fairy-land of pleasure, an Island of Calypso, and I wished for one night to be without a Mentor. I dreaded him; for with apostolic simplicity of manner, and purity of mind, he combined a knowledge of the human heart, a power of observation deep and accurate, beyond what his opportunities or his attention to life seemed to allow. "You are surprised to see me here; I was equally surprised myself when I first received a re-

quest to visit Montrevor-House. I knew how a Parson Adams usually fared at a squire's house, but when I heard that the request had originated with you, I no longer declined going, and my first reception was such as to make me consider every succeeding visit a duty." The shade concealed the flush of pleasure which mounted into my face while I listened to him. I did not wish him to know how deeply, too deeply, I was interested in his account. We were now behind an enormous candelabrum, whose height would have concealed Saul. He spoke without reserve—"I entered this house with little hope but of preserving myself from contempt, and retiring; I conceived it my duty, however, for perhaps I was the only one who would represent to his lordship the necessitous and deplorable state of the greater part of his tenantry. I knew the liberal and public spirit of many of the English nobility; I

knew many of them were then gloriously bent on improving the human soil of their country; I knew if there were men on earth intent on cultivating the morals and minds of the lower orders, and providing for the temporal and spiritual "comforts of the poor," they were the great people I have mentioned. I hoped one of them might have "wandered heaven-directed" to us. I fear I was mistaken. Lord M. is a man of the world, and I believe merely a man of the world. His whole heart and soul seem immersed in the mighty littlenesses of vanity and grandeur. I fear there is still a darker depth in his character. Few men are so fond of the reputation or ostentation, I should say of virtue, that did not feel it necessary to pacify the world or themselves. He wishes to be considered as a man equally splendid in rank and taste and morals. He showed the utmost impatience when I mentioned the subject to him first: we

were alone. The next day there was a large party at his table; he dined there; he made me repeat my whole detail again, the result of many years melancholy experience; interrupted me with comments that at least displayed the whole theory of benevolence; listened to various plans for the relief of the general state of the poor in this country; then proposed his own, which really displayed the perfection of sagacity and munificence; and when all the company were breathless with repeated praises of his understanding and his heart, he observed, with tones as harmonious as those of a ministering angel, that such language was painful, that there were some subjects best discussed in solitude, and rewarded, if they deserved reward, in the silence of conscience; that he was ashamed of having exposed his crude ideas on a subject of so much importance, but requested to defer it till he should have the pleasure of seeing Mr.

Corbett in his closet, to prosecute his inquiries, he felt too interesting for general discussion. Whether he felt it too interesting for private discussion too, I know not, but from that moment, though invited to his table every day, I have never been admitted to his closet ; and whenever I attempt to renew the subject, with (I had almost said) effrontery unanswerable, he entreats me not to oppress him by a mention of the trifling efforts he has made, and presents me visibly with some small sum, which he begs me to apply to the object about which we are so much interested. I conceive it to be merely a bribe for silence: however, I reflect that when "vanity relieves in bounty's stead," we may still be thankful for the effect, though we cannot congratulate ourselves much on the cause, and I apply his paltry donation to the objects he is so much interested in. Thus I am still retained about him by the hopes of partial good,

and though I am convinced he never will do any thing great in this country, never import any English improvements in the art of humanity, yet still such is the misery I am compelled to witness, that I am glad of the temporary relief I extort from Lord Montrevor's vanity. There is a worm I am sure at the root of the tree, but I will place my pilgrims under its shadow while I can."

This long detail might have given me breath, yet I could hardly utter the name of Lady Montrevor at the end of it. "She is a most extraordinary woman," said Mr. Corbett, and was silent. No silence was ever more unwelcome. All who love delight to listen to the name of the object from every lip but their own.

"What makes me fear," said Mr. Corbett, "that I never shall succeed with Lord M. is our having no common interest, no alternate power of serving each other. When two men of the world meet,

they have nothing to do but to compare their several objects, and if their alternate points coincide, the indentures are complete, and the engagement good. But there is nothing like this between me and Lord M. When he first saw me, he inquired into my preferment, lamented its mediocrity, and censured the establishment for its neglect of the inferior clergy. He then talked of his own interest and views for me; of his present object being to get the county for his son; that his wish was to engage the most respectable characters on his side, and particularly to conciliate the divines of both communions; that those who assisted his views (which were entirely for the benefit of the country) should find he was neither ungrateful nor incapable; that his eldest son Mr. Montolieu's tutor at Cambridge was now an English bishop, &c. &c. &c. In short, he was canvassing as completely as if his dressing-room was the hustings. When he permitted me to speak, I informed him

that I had nothing to lament, and no one to reproach; that the religion I professed had not promised me wealth, but peace of life and tranquillity of conscience, and I was satisfied, richly satisfied, with the compromise, that from the established church, of which I was a minister, I had no direct assurances of preferment, and therefore no reason to complain of disappointment, for if it was supposed to be administered on worldly principles, I had little chance of success, and if on principles purely spiritual, those principles certainly would never lead it to reward its ministers with wealth.

He tried to discover if this was the language of sullen and querulous pride. He found it was not. Not to justify myself to him, but to my own feelings, I spoke of them at length. I told what were my hopes and fears, my struggles and my ambition. I told him that a Christian whose hair was white, and whose feet trembled on the verge of the goal, who looked back

on a course of threescore years run in weakness of flesh, but willingness of spirit, and forward with a confidence which his retrospect had augmented, that such a being would not be bribed by a crown, to pause or to turn, except to bid those who offered to throw it aside, and join him. I might have spoken with too much vehemence: I was vehement. My heart was hot within me, the fire had kindled, and I spoke. But I spoke to him in vain. He regarded me first as an hypocrite, and then as a madman. There is no madness more desperate than that which gilds the straws and paints the walls of a squalid cell to the eye of the lunatic: such is his. We parted, I believe, with feelings for each other nearly the same. He finds I am unfit for business. But as he is not wholly unfit for mine while he continues to make me his almoner, I submit to be exposed in full canonicals in a drawing-room before all who please to see a live

parson, a situation to which I should otherwise prefer the pillory, provided I did not deserve to be put there." To the shame of my better feelings, I only listened that I might again inquire his opinion, his feelings about Lady Montrevor.

At this moment, however, dinner was announced, Lord M. never waiting later than seven; and I thought with vexation that I might have employed the interval in gazing on her by the shadowy light, which if it but half revealed her, but half revealed me.

The dinner party, which amounted to near sixty people, was almost arranged, when Lady M. observing Mr. Corbett retire to the second table, called to him to sit by her. "I am afraid to face this immense pillaw without your assistance; my lord says we are to have every thing in the classic costume, and you shall instruct me in the laws of augury, and tell me, do these birds omen well." I took the omen

of her attention to Mr. Corbett as a favorable one ; almost all her conversation was directed to him, yet still, from its flutter and gaiety, all appeared too much intended to distinguish herself. Her vanity, from an impulse, had become an habit. She could say nothing without a determination to be admired ; but never was her beauty more splendid, or her wit more playful than on that day. Every one remarked how amazingly delightful Lady Montrevor could be when she pleased—that is, when she was pleased to be in spirits.

The first course was nearly over as usual, when Lord Roschamp and Sir John were announced. “ Oh ! sit close to me, for heaven’s sake,” said Lady M. “ They are all in the majesty of mud, I see, and if you stir my train will suffer without benefit of clergy.” Lord Roschamp immediately strode up to her—“ I’ll give your ladyship twenty guesses, and I’ll be damned if you tell where Orberry and I are come from.”

“ If you gave me an hundred, I never could guess any place but the stable ; but as you cannot sit on the back of my chair, had not you better take a seat by Miss Montolieu, unless you prefer a table to yourself and boots and dine seul like a Chinese.” “ Oh damme, now that’s all wit, and I don’t understand it all—’pon my soul, I’ll punish you, and go tell my lord. My lord, by heavens it was the highest thing you ever knew, Orberry and I have spoiled a junketting party most famously.” “ I beg your lordship will sit down first; in this house it is not necessary to be on your legs in order to be heard.” “ But I must be on my legs, for I must shew you how it happened with my whip. Orberry and I were coming to dine with you at a good moderate hour about seven, for we had been out shooting, and came home to dress, and fell fast asleep, and just jumped up in our boots as we were,

and came off to you ; and just on the road before us there was an immense caravan of aunts, and grandmothers, and cousins, going to some infernal party or other on one of those damned cars that the savages here use ; and an half starved, half blind Galway garron dragging them along a road that was up to the nave of the wheels. But my lord, the most knowing thing of all was, that the road was all full of drains and holes across it—damme if ever I have a road mended near my house, it's so famously funny—and so, my lord, whenever they approached one of these, and could neither wade nor swim, by heavens the whole troop dismounted, and the driver just cracked his whip, and the old spanker leaped completely across with the empty car on his back, and they got round, and so on—so by heavens says I to Orberry I'll put them up to an amazing knowing touch, and he and I rode up, and

the very next slough they came to, just as they were all loose in their seats, Orberry and I gave a famous crack with our whips, and damme but the old hero obeyed the word of command, and gave such a plunge attempting to leap with the car on his back, and the whole congregation were as flat in the mire as Dr. Slop was that I was reading the other night when I had nothing to do—wasn't it amazingly famous my lord?" "And, of course, your delay was owing to the assistance you afforded the unfortunate ladies." "No, damme, it was owing to my staying to laugh at them; by heavens I thought I'd have dropped from the saddle, and the fellow was damned saucy and devilish impertinent to and cracked his whip at us when he saw us laughing." "I hope he did not knock you down, Sir John," said Lady M. with most ludicrous gravity. "No, curse me, but I rode away and left Roschamp to get out of the

scrape himself; it was his frolic, not mine."

Lord M., weary of this etourderie, or of any thing that interrupted his display of himself, again took occasion to lament the defectiveness of his rooms from the celleret not bearing the insignia of Bacchus, "and the chimney piece," said he in a tone of despondency, "the chimney-piece of an eating-room disfigured by the loves of Cephalus and Aurora, instead of appropriate groups of genii, with the tributes of Pomona and Ceres, and"—"and Comus and Circe, my lord," said Lady M. who immediately directed the whole force of her ridicule against the appropriate system. "Nothing can be conceived so fortunate in a dearth of ideas as the new system; I hope to see it entirely supersede conversation, and answer all the purposes of Mexican history painting; by emblematic allusions, drawn from our furniture,

we are entirely saved all trouble of thought or of employment. To finish a room with busts of writers, and wreath the frieze with the ancient scrolls instead of books, will answer every purpose of a library, and save reading, for want of which poor Lord R. the other night, was obliged to look into Tristram Shandy. In a short time, I am convinced it will be equally gratifying to the goûté to sit in a room furnished as an eating room with every thing but a table, as it was formerly to sit in one; and as for sleep, where Mr. Hope strews poppies, it is impossible not to sleep. Every function of life will be performed by the help of imagination, and nobody will have occasion to live in the vulgar sense, but the artists of our furniture, if Mr. Hope does not exterminate them with his pen. We shall know the employments of life by the names of our apartments, as Lucullus did the value of his entertainments.

“ I think the plan only admitted one im-

provement ; that the decorations of the different rooms should be emblematic of the company, as well as of their employments ; it would save an immensity of time in enquiring who and what people are, as well as the disappointment when we do know. There could be no mistake, such as imagining you were in company with grooms, and finding them only peers of the realm. The idea might be expanded most charmingly—would not you be highly delighted, Lord R., to have no objects ever near you, except dogs and horses, provided they were not classical, and you obliged to explain their pedigree ?”

“ ’Pon my soul I should, except it was your ladyship.” “ Oh no, no, dogs and horses, my lord, or an Acteon and hounds, Sir John (this was unmercifully true), and your apartment, Mr. Hammond, should be decorated with a Juno Pronuba, or Juno when she borrowed the cestus from love, and yours, Mr. Bethel, with a Roman piety.”

She paused, but her eye spoke a fatal language. To be praised by her was too much for me, it made me giddy with delight; I had been accustomed to view her from such a distance; her rank, her beauty, her high and married state, had poured such awe into my love, that now that she condescended to lavish on me such an excess of feeling, and praise, and honour, now that I saw her eyes kindle as they turned on me, and her angel-smile brighten when she perceived I watched to meet it; now that she seemed to sacrifice her dignity to her friendship, and avow me as one whom eloquence burned to praise, and beauty delighted to honor (me to whom a transient smile, a casual word of softness would have been the treasured secret of a life's remembrance)—she was resistless.

Who was there whom such praise, from such lips, would not intoxicate? And she had remembered me in solitude, and

in suffering; she had remembered me when every one else forgot me. Her friendship had been the single star that beamed on me in darkness, and which no darkness could quench; and now that I had emerged to light, its blaze poured on me 'intolerable day.' The whole splendor of her talents, and ardor of her vanity seemed to concentrate their rays to make my name and memorial luminous and white. She never looked so perfectly, so humanly lovely in my eyes as that night. I thought dinner would never be over; it might have raised the ghost of Apicius, had its flavor reached him; but all my senses were absorbed in sight.

I was detained and persecuted, when the ladies retired by a kind of general conspiracy to distinguish me. I was taught to feel that to be the heir of De Lacy was to fill a conspicuous station in the eyes of the country; no one would have 'borne their faculties more meekly,' had I been suf-

ferred ; but I was assailed with a thousand inquiries and congratulations, and condolences ; my whole story was told to my face, my uncle's age accurately ascertained, and every acre of his estate measured and estimated in spite of my stubborn silence and visible confusion.

Lord Roschamp, who had drank wine with me at dinner, at length interrupted the declamation by demanding whether I had taken lessons from Belcher, or some other boxer, whose name he mentioned. I answered in the negative. " Why then, damme, but you have a famous notion of it ; I wish you would come to Roschamp-House every morning, and I'd spar a little with you for practice, and I have a billiard-table, and a damned good stud, and cold meat and Madeira on the table every morning at one o'clock, and I shall be devilish glad to see you." This was meant for courtesy, but I could only answer it by a bow ; certain unpleasant recollections

flushed my cheek at the moment, and made me bow unusually low to conceal it.

“Damme, now, you must not be sulky, I hate that most infernally; there’s Orberry, whom you knocked down, and you see he looks, by heavens, just as he always does.” “Why what the devil Roschamp,

what are you always talking nonsense for?”

“Why, damme, Orberry, I believe you feel sore still.” “No, but one always forgets those things as soon as possible.”—

“I admire Sir John’s conciliating habit, and hope Mr. Bethel will follow so good an example,” said Lord M. who loved to be an umpire, and to magnify his office.—

“Oh, ’pon my soul, I never expect to be cordial with Bethel, now that I recollect the offence I have given him. My lord, do you know I have not left him a place to say his prayers in nearer than Clonfert Church, and damme if I know where that is yet, though I am here every shooting season. Why, my lord, is it not devilish

hard that my servants cannot have a room to dance in of a Sunday evening? They told me the church was condemned or ruined, or something of that kind, and so they brought a heap of forms into my hall, and turned my porter's chair into a reading desk, and there Mr. Corbett and Mr. Bethel used to read prayers to each other, and the hall was quite useless for the remainder of the day. Now I always like to see my servants pleasant of a Sunday evening, so I kicked all their lumber to splinters." "Lord Roschamp, I beg you to remember that the Established Church and its ministry must always be spoken of with respect at my table." "Lord Roschamp, allow me to remind you that Mr. Corbett must always be spoken of respectfully in my presence." "Hey, why what the devil, I shall be schooled famously between you; damme but I'll say what I like at any table; I'd say it at my own. I think the establishment, and all that

damned nonsense, cursed folly, 'pon my soul; maintaining a parcel of people just to do nothing in the world, and" — "Don't say so, my lord," said Mr. Corbett, whose lips never uttered asperity before, "you know we are to pray that the nobility may have grace, and wisdom, and understanding." "I shall be happy to hear the establishment defended by so able an advocate," said Lord M., who delighted himself with exposing the venerable old man to the tumult and roughness of such an antagonist as Lord R. — "I myself have heard some trifling objections made to its existence and utility, which, I make no doubt, Mr. Corbett will refute with equal skill and facility." "If your lordship will have the goodness to enumerate them, I shall at least undertake the refutation with facility."

This was making his lordship the objector, the very thing he was wishing to avoid; his desire was to expose the establishment to obloquy, and its advocate

to contempt, and when his rancour was sufficiently gratified, he proposed to act the moderator, and ridicule the weakness of a cause which could only be preserved from disgrace by the courtesy of hospitality, by "his lordship's wish that the establishment should be treated with respect at his lordship's table."

He hesitated, and declined, and evidently waited to give the blow under some one's buckler; but though the company were by no means distinguished for religious feeling, the universal respect for Mr. Corbett had silenced them. He paused for a moment, and then said in his usual nervous simplicity of manner, I am not to understand any of these objections are levelled against Christianity itself, but merely against that mode of professing and administering it which the Established Church adopts. If I am, the ground of contest is changed, and I doubt not but your lordship's valuable

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library abounds with books which would render all that I could say superfluous.

“ With regard to the establishment, no one who admits the truth of religion, will deny that religion must be taught and enforced by ministers and ordinances, for if he takes his system from Scripture, I think he will find that Scripture prescribes positive rites, and individuals set apart to solemnize them ; and if he takes his system from his own mind, (exclusive of its being vague and irrational, to wander from authority to impulse) that mind must be strangely constituted to whom its principles and duties never required to be recalled and unfolded ; that needed neither monitor nor counsellor, whose devotion was intirely independent of externals, whose hopes never sought support, and whose doubts never needed illumination. The establishment has been accused of aggrandizing itself, yet it is known that many of its

members are not wealthy; it has been accused of neglecting those who are not, yet if they are contented with their obscurity, where is the cruelty of neglecting them? They should be supposed to have a consolation from the very nature and exercise of their profession, that acts as a balance to all its inconveniencies. If they want it they should not have entered into a profession without the spirit of it; if they have it, they hardly need any other. I have been always what the world calls poor, but I have never been dissatisfied. With regard to the general character of the establishment, and the persons who compose it, if we seek for perfection of principle and discipline, we must seek it among an 'Hierarchy of Angels;' if we admit that they are men, we must also admit that the weakness of man will sometimes appear in their conduct. I have heard of a man who blinded himself by attempting to reckon the spots in the sun. Had he en-

joyed its light, it would have been better. That system is to be praised, if not as perfect, at least as excellent, which admits the fewest opportunities of that evil which it cannot entirely exclude, and that mode of worship, which, retaining a form of prayer, cannot be abused by the corruptions or weakness of man, which allows the distinction of eloquence in a public address, and preserves the reading of the Scriptures in a popular language, a part of worship by much the most important, and by much the most neglected or defaced in other institutions. Such a mode of worship may at least be retained till the wisdom of the age, which explodes it, shall have suggested a better."

In the midst of the praises with which this defence was received, for all are pleased with the spirit of a manly and moderate defence, I retired, leaving Lord Montrevor concluding his loud and sincere commendations, like Vinosus in Cowper, "I glide

and steal along with heaven in view, and—pardon me, the bottle stands with you.”

In the drawing-room the ladies were employed in admiring, and Lady M. in laughing at, their admiration of a splendid edition of Hope's splendid work on household furniture. Equally amused by their exaggerated praises, and their ignorance of the Pagan mythology, she poured out the whole Pantheon on them, and traversed the whole range of antiquity, from the height of the Acropolis, to the depths of Herculaneum. Her knowledge was really extensive, and her wit and spirit would have made it appear so, if it had been even superficial. But nothing could stimulate her to exertion but the pleasure of vanity; she conquered only to triumph, and she was satisfied to triumph equally over strength and weakness. Yet, while my heart ached for powers so distinguished

and abused, and wretchedness seeking relief from the indulgence of vanity, I was dazzled like the rest, and like the rest listened and looked till I forgot every thing.

“Oh, Mr. Bethel,” said she, pausing from her career, and depressing her voice, “the fairy Good-will is the most placable of all the fairy tribe, or she would have punished you for slighting her favors.” As she spoke, she moved from the table where the company were standing, “This lamp wants trimming.” I followed her: I faltered out “I was sufficiently punished by being compelled to decline her favors. I was unhappy—unworthy of them. I only desired to be forgotten—but not by all. I wished my heart to be frozen and hard, except in one warm and bright recess.” I had involuntarily raised my voice. “So you cannot trim an Argand’s lamp, without giving a long lecture on heat and light—Oh, I hate sciolists—

No more of that if you love me." I understood her address. I depressed my voice, "If I could but speak to you alone, but tell you what I have felt, what I yet feel."

"Aurora," said she, catching a word from the group at the table, "Oh, you have got into the Aurora apartment, of which the decorations are all to be suggested by Flaxman's fine design of Cephalus and Aurora. Well, do all those orange draperies, and black marble chimney-piece, and roses and stars en suite, throw light or darkness visible on your imaginations? Apropos of Aurora, Mr. Bethel, I must shew you a portrait of my eldest daughter, Lady Castle Wycomb, in the costume of Aurora; 'tis in the next room; I have just got it from London." I followed her. We were alone.—I trembled with love and gratitude.—We were alone—it was the moment, that had the whole choice of life been allowed me, I would have selected as

its brightest one. Yet, when it arrived, I lost all power of language, almost all power of feeling. "I have wished for this opportunity, and now that I enjoy it, its pleasure has taken from me all power—all words—What shall I say?" "Nothing, nothing in the world, except to tell me why you give me such pain and pleasure. Your conduct is so strange, and your heart so good, that I have been crying and laughing at you alternately since I have known you. Your success, however, has determined the strife between "a smile and a tear," and left the first in lawful possession of my countenance—How can you bear all this badinage from me?" "I can bear any thing, every thing but this softness, this condescension. I can bear all the blaze of your wit and your beauty, but when you are thus, it is too much for me—too much for man—don't be displeased with me, if I stay I shall offend you. I cannot, no I cannot contain the

feelings with which you have filled me—
My voice is lost when I attempt to speak—
See how you have made me glow and
tremble—Feel how you have made my
heart beat!” “No, no, no:” (she with-
drew her hand) “I have nothing to do
with hearts—I have no heart, at least, I
think not, till some such character as your’s
makes it ache with agony and pleasure.
I was born to be a different being from
what I am. No one ever loved the theory
of moral principles so much that deviated
so much from the practice. I am a riddle
to myself and the whole world, which
never will be solved till I die, and give
them a greater to puzzle themselves with,
How Lady Montrevor came to die of a
broken heart? But don’t be afraid, Mr.
Bethel, I shall live long enough to admire
all the great actions in the world if I live
only a year. In this vile world, to meet
with any thing like a heart or soul recon-
ciles one to it for a time, and animates the

spirits, such spirits as mine at least; a few more such characters as Mr. Bethel's would lower the price of laudanum amazingly. I really cannot contain my admiration. I could not even induce myself to spare your feelings by withholding my public and ardent suffrage in your praise. You made me feel, and it has been of use to me; you have interested me, and I am grateful to you. I wish to show my gratitude. You must make a distinguished figure in life. I have some interest yet; it shall be exerted for you. Though I have retired to a desert island, I have not buried my book and wand." I whispered something of an Ariel directing and soothing my progress with 'airs from heaven.' "There must be no more of this; you are always giving the apple to Venus, instead of Juno or Minerva. Remember the consequences of the preference.—I wish to consider you as my son, or grandson if you will, and you must consider me as—

I thought I heard a noise.' "I can hear nothing but you." "Absurd." "Don't take your hand from me—I will listen, and 'mark the music.'—Is it a crime to love the 'touches of sweet harmony?' Oh, if you knew, if you but knew how I devoured the lines this beautiful hand traced, when I thought they were the last I ever should see of its forming!" "So they will, if you devour the beautiful hand too." "Laugh at me, but leave it with me. I was that moment, that very moment, preparing to leave the country, yet I lingered to read them, and when I was pursuing my dreary way, it cheered me to place them next my heart." "Oh yes, I know you were on the wing, quite a Mercury, with every thing but his purse. But all this is very foolish and improper; desist, I beg, I command. The fairy Good-will herself may be banished by—We must return to the drawing-room—we have been here too

long—Enthusiast, release me. An enthusiast is of all animals either the most dangerous or the most safe—it is for you I fear, not for myself, ‘Honi soit qui mal y pense,’ as Mrs. Freke says in *Belinda*.” “A Freke will not always excuse deliberate impropriety,” said a voice as we quitted the cabinet. I heard it. She did not. She immediately mixed in the company, which the gentlemen had now joined, with her usual facility, resumed the broken chain of her ideas in a moment, and even those whose weakness she was exposing declared, that it was the most charming evening they had ever passed, and that Lady Montrevor had the most delightful wit and spirits in the world.

As we separated, I had but just time to ask what she thought of Mr. Corbett. “He is a most extraordinary man,” was the answer. Their mutual similarity of feeling was singular.

I found it was a kind of etiquette

among people of rank in the country or in Ireland, not to resort to the usual modes of entertaining company: there were no cards, no music, no dancing proposed; it was fashionable to appear to feel a total dearth of amusements. Lord Montrevor declaimed as usual on the splendid improvements he intended to make at Montrevor-House. Her ladyship as usual tried to turn every thing he said into ridicule, and succeeded too well; but neither her wit nor her contradiction could discompose his lordship's inflexible politeness. Elevated to the frozen region of apathy, he saw the lightnings flash beneath him. "When it is your father's pleasure," whispered Lady Montrevor to her daughter, "to play *Le bon Mari* for his own benefit, nothing can make him the *Provoked Husband*." This scarce extorted a smile from Miss Montolieu, from whom even Sir John Orberry failed to draw a smile by shewing her what seemed

to be a penciled caricature, which he had shown to every one in the room except Lady Montrevor and me. "I must see that Sir John," said Lady Montrevor, "I know it is intended to make one laugh, and your intentions that way seldom fail of success."

He led her with an appearance of secrecy to a part of the room where a bronze figure stood with lights near her untouched harp. "Your ladyship must not mention it," said he; "I just sketched it under the table while Mr. Corbett was giving us a sermon after dinner, one word of which I do not remember." "You need not be afraid," said she, glancing her eye on it, and moving away, "I shall neither expose it nor the author." It was, I understood afterwards, a caricature of Mr. Corbett in the attitude of preaching, and of me as his clerk giving out a psalm. "My Lord, if you have any intention of decorating your rooms, I beg you will summon Sir John Orberry to your

assistance; don't be afraid, Sir John, I said I would not expose you; you can't conceive my lord any thing like his taste, except his execution. I think it was Michael Angelo that stabbed a man to finish a subject for his picture. Sir John is more heroic, for he exposes his own person to danger to complete his design. But, Sir John, though you only think of reputation, we must consider your safety, and I cannot think of a better way of securing it, than by committing this paper to the flames."

As she spoke, she took the paper from Lord Roschamp, who was twirling it about, and evidently anxious that I should see it, and threw it into the fire. Hammond, Mr. Corbett, and I, were collected round to examine some Egyptian antiques with which it was decorated. Many of them were originals, and had been collected in Egypt by Col. Montolieu during the expedition. She appeared to feel that she had said or done

too much in resentment of Sir John's paltry libel, and she immediately caught another subject, which she followed with her usual facility. "Can you conceive, Mr. Hammond, how those horrid Egyptian figures ever became popular, or at least so popular as to exclude the Grecian? it was a tribute to our military honors, but the balance of taste I think never should be adjusted by the sword. I suppose all our rooms will now be shaded with the planes of South America—only observe," said she, taking a cameo from the bosom of her robe, "observe the difference between that black, shapeless Egyptian figure of memory on the chimney-piece, and this Grecian one on my broach. I am convinced Prometheus was a Grecian statuary. One is the work of the chissel, the other the work of the mind." She placed herself in the attitude of the figure as she spoke; every one rose to gaze; a murmur of praise ran through the room; she

enjoyed it too much; she assumed other attitudes—a tragic muse, a Grecian mourner, a Roman actress (*Arbuscula*) in the attitude of declaring she preferred the applause of Cæsar to that of the whole theatre. No one in the room but one felt the Cæsar to whom she pointed. My eyes grew dim with passion while I gazed.—“But there are some tolerable figures in the Egyptian costume too; an Isis seated is not ungraceful. Miss Montolieu, have the goodness to bring your cymbals or your tambourine; there is something Egyptian in their form, at least they will do better than a sistrum that we have not. Mr. Bethel, I had almost lost my memory; put it here, just above the zone.”

I would sooner have undertaken any of the labours of Hercules. I knew it was an office which fashionable men perform about fashionable women without any emotion, but to adjust that broach, just above that zone—it was impossible.

Penelope's web was never more tedious—my hands shook—my very eyes failed.

"You are amazingly tedious. I might have sent to Egypt for a sistrum, if some of the company could have asked for it by name." Her robe was bordered with flowers: I entangled the broach in them.

"There now, you have torn my wreath; but I suppose you set no value on any wreath but a civic one. Lord Roschamp was not a civic wreath awarded by the ancients to the man who saved the life of another in battle? Don't attempt making any apologies; I am sure it was malice propense, because they were orange-blossoms, and I wore them merely to harmonize, as the French say, with this robe of orange crape—there keep it," said she, for I had desisted from any further attempts to adjust it. "It is a memory you see, and whenever you touch the gem, the genius shall attend you, and all the other slaves of the gem." This was said

in the depressed tone that a tumult of voices easily concealed. Miss M. now approached with the cymbals, and her mother taking them, assumed the attitude of an Egyptian figure playing. Miss M. attempted to assume a dancing attitude to accompany her, but after a struggle with timidity or dejection, burst into tears, and retired.

The company was too numerous to be disconcerted by her absence. I will speak no more of the dangerous indulgences of this night. I looked at her, I listened to her, I spoke to her, or I felt her presence in silence; and when I returned home I dreamed a dream so passing sweet that night——The next morning I had a visit from Mr. Corbett. I have mentioned his powers of observation: I have mentioned his strong affection for me. Our interview lasted nearly for an hour; the result of it was that I determined immediately to quit the country. His representations

were so strong, his fears my own heart interpreted to be so just, my dejection, when the intoxication of local pleasure had subsided, was so deep and hopeless, my passion, though I never concealed it, avowed itself with such remorse and despair, that I had no longer any power of resistance. He told me I must go, and I was willing to go, for no where could I be more miserable than I was.

When the feast, with which my uncle honored our reconciliation, was over, when Lady M. honored it with her presence, and when I had again been guilty of a thousand extravagancies, I felt myself that I must go. My uncle too was anxious that his heir should live some time in the capital of the country where he was to reside, and to me Dublin was as indifferent as any other place. My uncle, with his usual munificence and simplicity, appointed me a large income, and Deloraine for my companion. I tore myself from Hammond, from my

sister, and Mr. Corbett; the latter said, "I am only reconciled to the danger you are about to encounter, by reflecting that you avoid greater by your flight." I could not answer him. I sought not compassion or counsel from living thing; I wished no one to look into my heart; I wished no one to look steadily in my face—it was flushed with the shame of a guilty and concealed passion. Poor Mary's fate was an emblem of mine: the relation which she bore to me, I bore myself to the object I loved; we were both too distant for hope, though not for desire—we both loved, and dared not tell—loved, and dared not hope—loved, and never must attain.

I went to Dublin, and Deloraine was my companion. I wished I could be here permitted to drop my pen.--- A young man, a boy of violent passions, and unrestrained opportunities, whose despair was the despair of passion, and who sought to intoxicate his senses to

appease his heart, accompanied and assisted by one whose whole existence seemed to be the spirit and pursuit of pleasure, placed in one of the most relaxed and voluptuous cities in the world, such a one—need I say more—I cannot, I will not. The very luxury by which I was surrounded, fed with rich and fatal temptation the passion which, amid distress and danger, had been a solace—feeble, and lambent, and remote—I was like young Claudio; at first ‘I looked upon her with a soldier’s eye that loved, but had a rougher task in hand; but now I am returned, and that war-thoughts have left their places vacant, in their rooms come thronging soft and delicate desires, all prompting me how fair she is.’ Yet my residence in Dublin cannot be entirely passed over. The manners of the place had a large share in what I did or suffered there. The habits of society there differ essentially, I believe, from any

other metropolis in the world. In all other cities the spirit of pleasure, both with inhabitants and strangers, is supported by the public entertainments, and the place, gay or dull, as these are, brilliant and varied.

In Dublin, a number of places of entertainment would be an indication that the natives had quitted their residence there, or at least their national character. The few places of public entertainment there are wretchedly conducted, and, except on the appearance of some local phænomenon, wretchedly attended; but this cannot be imputed to any discoverable defect either in their love of pleasure, or their taste: when present at them, they feel with all the vivid sensibility of their character, and criticise with a taste which has not unfrequently dictated to a London audience in the choice and merit of performers. But in public places the Irish are not at home. They have no room for

the display of that mingled hospitality and splendour, and profusion and vanity, that mark their entertainments and their disposition. If it be possible to imagine a kind of unselfish pride, a cordial and generous vanity, a pomp that desires as much to warm as to dazzle, such is the spirit of an Irish entertainer and his feast. The number of private engagements, the perpetual intercourse of what are called parties, at which persons of moderate fortunes, or fortunes that in England would be taken out of the proprietor's hands on a commission of lunacy (for such a line of conduct) conceive the eclat quite diminutive, unless two or three hundred people are dispersed through all the rooms in the house, of which every one doth "blaze with lights, and bray with minstrelsy;" unless high play, dancing, and music by the first professional artists diversify the evening, and it conclude with a supper, where all the wreaths of spring blush on the

table, which is in general covered with exquisite provisions, and wine such as you would seek in vain, unless at the first tables in London. Is this the mode of living universal?—It is. The Irish, like the Vicar of Wakefield, appear to have a passion for a number of cheerful faces illuminated by pleasure and festivity, and they gratify their human virtù at any price. This is not always to be ascribed to a mere and desultory love of expense and dissipation. The professional men of Dublin, whose success must depend in a great measure on their popularity, are obliged to court that popularity the Irish way; and if reputation be acquired in one city by the character of sober indulgence, and frugal moderation, and in another by that of gaiety, facility, and splendor; the object is the same, and the mode, if practicable, much more pleasant. The entertainments of the legal and medical profession, even of those who are by no

means distinguished in either, exceed those given, or expected to be given, by the first class of either in England.

I have been told a circumstance of one of the first physicians in London. Immediately after dinner, at which there had been no transgression of abstinence, after a slight apology for his absence, he ordered his carriage to attend his patient, and on his return, spent the remainder of the evening in study. Such conduct in a Dublin physician would probably fail to procure him the reputation of either talents or practice, and would certainly deprive him of the reality of the latter. But in Ireland we are excited to employ professional people, not merely from the report of their talents. We seldom have mere report to trust to—In England professional men are not often seen, but by their own light, where all objects appear most bright, and in their own sphere, where their movements are certainly most observable—but in Ireland

they are pleasant, convivial men, whom we have met every where, and whom we have liked to meet: men who dine with us, and with whom we dine, between whom and us the facility of frequent intercourse has probably added friendship to professional respect, and the suavity of whose manners conciliated us before the reputation of their talents were known.

So much may be said in defence of the splendid modes of professional life in Dublin, if to strangers it require defence; but it must be acknowledged that the habits of vague and desultory expense, and of loose, domestic dissipation, have reached other parts of life where they cannot be defended. The Irish must entertain, in whatever station of society they are placed. Nothing is more common in Dublin, than for a number of people, without any connexion of habits from business or accident, or any ties of regard, to live together in an alternate circle of

entertainment, where 'night nods at night, and each supper has its brother,' and drag out their winters and summers too in a joyless and sleepy repetition of expense without equivalent, and amusement without variety—without the communication of a single idea, or the improvement of a single feeling, or faculty, or moment of their time. All exertions must be proportioned to the powers that make them, or must over-strain them. The resources which supply this perpetual jet d'eau of pleasure must be deducted from the general fertility of the ground. There is not much wealth in Ireland. The elegantly-dressed, and sometimes accomplished and intellectual daughters of the middling, and even of the higher families, have seldom such fortunes as a diminutive London trader would think himself bound to acquire for his daughters.

In Dublin there is much of speculation in business, much struggle in profession,

Much emulous splendor in families, and much misery among individuals. There are still many points in which the Irish, as individuals, differ from the English. An Englishman at sixteen is a more sober, selfish animal, with more desire of his own indulgence, and more skill in combining that indulgence with his interest, than an Irishman at any age of the world; yet an Englishman is a better family-man. The Irish are more ardent lovers, the English better husbands. The Irishman is more exhilarating in society, the Englishman's comforts are more domestic. One is formed to give more delight, the other more tranquil and rational happiness to life. The Irishman approaches you with facility, and attaches himself to you with ardor; the Englishman it is difficult to conciliate as an acquaintance, and more difficult to obtain for a friend, but once obtained, the prize is beyond all labor. In talent the Irish are not deficient, but

their national talents form a loose and confused mass, without analysis and without momentum; it is matter not without spirit, but without 'form and void:' in some classes it is depressed by poverty, in all classes it is defaced by indolence, and exhausted by dissipation. He whose talents can promote conviviality, seeks for them no higher use or object; he who can please without study, never wishes, by study, to convert pleasure into utility. He who delights the circle among whom he lives, never dreams of extending his sphere, or enlarging his powers. The visible horizon bounds his mental view. Like the first men in Goldsmith's Apologue, he knows no higher mountains than those he has looked up to from his birth; beyond them he thinks of nothing, or thinks all is vacancy; and this is not from want of knowledge, or want of ambition, it is an insensibility of the mental powers produced by the perpetual use of the most

exciting stimulants. To a philosopher, the world from a distance, or the world for a moment, may be viewed as an object of curiosity and observation, but if once in passing through the fair, he finds a pleasure or a demand for its joys, he ceases to be a philosopher. An Irishman's habits of reading are temporary and superficial; his efforts of talent are desultory and eccentric; his study is a banqueting-room; and the presidents of the feast are always the Graces and Venus. He may be excited to exertion by pride, but he reposes again in pleasure. The giant, in the fable, acquired new strength every time he touched the earth; the Irishman seems to derive fresh strength from what would depress and debilitate any other mind: he can assume the port of Hercules when he will, but it is his pleasure to be the slave of Omphale.

The peculiarities of the Irish character are at least eminently favorable to stran-

gers. In London, or in any other city, unless you adopt the expensive and unsocial resource of public amusements, or are domesticated with a few private families, you may pass in your utter solitude. In Dublin, with the mere advantage of the exterior and habits of genteel life, you may pass every evening in gay and polished society, where, if the mind is not much enlarged, the senses at least are amused; if useful connections are not formed, facility is at least acquired; and men forbear to acquire that cold, selfish, solitary, tavern-haunting, woman-hating life, of sober intoxication, and comfortless indulgence, in which many Englishmen, married and unmarried, wear out existence.

I need not speak of the distinguished advantages of the Irish in the society; it is easy to suppose, that men so anxious to please, must be peculiarly anxious to please those on whom so much of the pleasure of life depends. The fact is well known: wo-

men universally prefer the society of Irishmen; they are better acquainted with the modes of pleasing, their minds are more plastic and pliant, their manners are more striking and animated, they flatter with more facility, and trifle with more grace. But such success must be attained by some sacrifice: the Irishman, who lives in pleasure, and who lives to please, must have less dignity, stability, and force of character, than he who lives for other purposes. He is more attractive among women, but less eminent among men. The ardor, the levity, and the ductability of the national character, appear in the greater as well as the lesser parts of life. In Ireland we marry for love, struggle vigorously against indigence, and when wealth is attained, squander it; adopt extensive plans of improvement; run in debt at the commencement of them, and leave both obligations unfulfilled. In literature we have more orators than men of learning,

and more wits (more men of sparkling minds, and ambitious conversation,) than authors, in society more splendor than wealth, and more dissipation than amusement—yet with all their errors, the Irish are an amiable people, and will yet be a great one. I have heard a man of high intellectual powers say of them, ‘The Irish are a people who have never had their day, but when they have, what a people will they be!’

Of the College, the only seminary in Ireland except the Catholic one at Maynooth, I must again express my dissatisfaction. It is not calculated to answer the great purposes of national improvement. The system was constructed at a time when learning was the privilege of a few who were not willing to communicate it to others, when philosophy was not brought down from colleges to dwell among men. There is too much of the old, monastic, unprofitable, inaccessible spirit in the system. I do not

speaking of the discipline—the discipline of a college cannot be too strict: I speak of their literature. They are eminently skilled in its more abstruse parts; they must be distinguished mathematicians, &c. &c. &c. in order to acquire a fellowship. But of these sciences the principal use is in the application to certain parts of life with which the fellow of a college has no concern. A skilful mathematician may for instance make some improvement in mechanics, to which I believe no fellow dreamed of applying his mathematical knowledge. But they are certainly not distinguished by classical erudition, which adds much to the elegant and subtle spirit of research in literature, or by their attainments in English literature, on which depends, in a great measure, its facility, extension, and use in life. A mathematician is rarely wanted, but life always requires historians, civilians, poets, and orators. I know that these depart-

ments, and what should belong to them, are not neglected in the University of Dublin, but I knew the attention paid to them is secondary and unproductive, and must be so when distinction in them is rewarded by occasional premiums, and the great prize of a fellowship is reserved for scientific eminence exclusively. I may use the term, when it is remembered that of the four days appointed for the examination for the fellowships, the three first are consumed in a range of sciences, while Greek, Latin, Hebrew, History, Chronology, Antiquity, &c. &c. &c. are compressed into the four or two last hours of the competition. I speak of the University with reverence, for its defects are in the institution, not in the individuals who compose it, who, under happier auspices, might and will be 'the illustrious men, and ingenuous youths,' which Mr. Grattan, the lover of his country and of its institutions, once hailed them, (but

innovation is not to be lightly undertaken, or easily executed, it is always difficult, sometimes dangerous.) But I speak of it also with earnestness, both of feeling and conviction, for I believe in the present, or indeed in any state of the country in the hands of the national instructor of youth, are the issues almost of national life and death.

I again recoil from the remembrance of my mode of life in Dublin. It is, I am afraid, too justly represented in the letters which precede my narrative. They speak of me indeed 'as I am, and if they set down nothing in malice, they certainly do naught extenuate.' They represent me justly as impelled in a course in which I might otherwise have hesitated by Deloraine's example and praise, (and most powerful of all) his ridicule. I had rushed into dissipation, seduced by the novelty of the scene, and solicitous to forget one on whose thought it was madness to dwell;

But when novelty had ceased, and I found no efforts of mirth or spleen could teach me that 'hardest science to forget,' I was still forced to rush on, and to forget myself.

At the termination of my winter in Dublin, I was seized with a violent fever: my constitution was poisoned, my mind was corroded; no one believed I could live—I did not wish to live. When I thought how I had acquitted myself to society, to my uncle, how I had lavished the wealth, and defaced the name I was to honor, how I had blazed the meteor of a season, and how soon my blaze was exhausted, and I was hastening to darkness, I felt my blood glow even beyond the heat of fever; but when I remembered how little life had fulfilled its promises to me, that I never could be happy, that to me but one spot on the earth was Eden, and from that I was driven, I took refuge in the danger which they no longer concealed from me.

I retain but few traces of my feelings at

that time, till I was roused to feeling as by an electric shock. I recollect grasping, even through sleep, the gem which I always wore in my bosom. I recollect imploring them to conceal the cause of my death from my uncle; after that I recollect nothing till a voice said to me, "Your uncle, the De Lacy, is arrested, and in Eyre-court jail for your debts." I started up; the words were repeated by Deloraine's servant. What would in any other circumstance have killed me, restored me to sensation, to life, at that moment: yet, with my recollection perfectly awakened, I acted as if under the impulse of delirium, in the rage of fever; I threw on my clothes—I sprang into a carriage. I travelled in the depth of winter to Connaught; I had barely money to defray my expenses. My intention was to implore them to confine me in his place, to let me die in the prison I had deserved. Long before I had arrived, he

had been liberated on the security of half the county. It was the event of a moment, but it was a moment my uncle never forgot, and never recovered.

It had been an error in my uncle, but a deliberate intention to stab his feelings mortally on the part of the creditors. He had been accustomed to supply me by drafts upon an house in Dublin. Indolent and averse to business, and believing, like many others who have attained sudden wealth, that that wealth can know no bounds, I committed the management of our finances to Deloraine, who contrived to exceed our ample income, and went deeply in debt for a new curricule and horses, of which, when I learned the value, I sent them back to the owner's stable, and ordered the money to be deducted from the price of a carriage which I had bespoke for my uncle. The bill was brought to him at the time when he had divested himself of most of his ready

cash to furnish my half year's allowance. He was told this debt was contracted by Mr. Bethel. He answered that he supplied Mr. Bethel by drafts on a banking-house in Dublin. He was told in a jargon he did not understand, that that would not do, &c. &c. He desired time. He was told that his creditor was in distress himself. He applied to his steward: his steward had just collected his rents, and closed the accounts for the quarter, but offered to raise a temporary supply by distraining the goods, and driving the lands of some insolent tenants. My uncle went to prison. The whole country rose in anger and shame. Eyre-Court was thronged with the first gentlemen in the country, offering security for his liberation. The tenants who would have defrauded, but not distressed him, came in with rents which had been withheld year after year by them, declaring, that if he pleased he might take the turf from their little bit of

clamp, and the potatoes out of the children's mouths, and the little rag of clothes off their backs, for they had nothing else to give. My uncle was attended to the castle by hundreds of the gentry and tenantry, and his towers shook with the acclamations of half a county—but the blow was struck. The people who arrested him could have had no intentions of seriously injuring a man whose property was extensive, and whose temporary distress must be the result of a combination of fraud and accident: their only object was to arrest him. The consequence of debt to him must be trifling and brief; the consequences of the indignity they hoped would be fatal.

It is not from a contempt, or a savage and wilful blindness to the utility of jurisprudence, that its exercise is an indelible insult to a Milesian, it is from a rooted belief of native and necessary aristocracy of character and station, a belief that the

conquests of the English have not reached him, that he is yet a sovereign in his own territory, and accountable only to himself for his actions. The forms of modern policy, that equal distribution of justice which extends to every part of society, he does not despise, or defy, but he does not understand, or imagine how they can affect him. He hears of them as if they were the laws of another country—hears of them, and rejoices that he is a Milesian, and exempt from all restraints but those of his own spirit. Such were my uncle's feelings, and such therefore was his despondency. The malice of the transaction was so obvious, that it was with difficulty the persons who had executed the writ escaped. A Connaught mob have but indistinct notions of political justice. The event was however eminently favourable to my uncle. He was compelled to look into the state of his affairs. He found them much more favor-

able than he had been allowed to believe by his steward who had hitherto been entrusted with their sole inspection. He had been constantly in the habit of receiving fees from the tenants for abatement of rent, and representations of their distress, when no distress existed. Thus the poor wretches confessed themselves in the penitent agony of the moment, when they saw their Chieftain going to jail, a sight which they swore by the immaculate mother of the L--rd they had lived too long to see, and they the cause of it. "We are the biggest villains that ever stood on God's earth, except Neal Gahagan (the steward), and he would cheat the devil himself, for he cheated us and you. If you had sent your dog for the eyes out of our heads, you should have had them---turn back, turn back, for the love of Christ, and you shall have it all, and why not, and our hearts' blood upon the back of it?---turn back, De Lacy, turn back, or

the stones will leap out of Eyre-Court wall, before they will shut you in."

Such was the cry of hundreds, whose affection (with the true Irish levity, and want of principle) submitted to defraud the man, at whose prison door they swore on their knees they would have them sowers heart's blood upon a stone, and the cry of the widow in the house, before morning. When the whole train of fraud and peculation was unfolded, my uncle exclaimed, he never could have believed any evidence but that of his senses, of Gahagan's villainy. "He was my foster-brother," said he; "we were nursed by the same milk; I never could have believed it."

All had been adjusted before I reached Connaught. I was only detained a few minutes on the road by Deloraine, who had followed and overtaken me, and locking the door of the room into which he had pursued me, adjured me to preserve him from the resentment of his

uncle, and the odium of the business.”

“ You know, Ormsby, it was my regard for you that tempted me to exceed your expenditure. I thought it scandalous that your spirit and indulgences should be checked by such paltry limitations. I never could have checked you. My affection for you betrayed me into folly—into extravagance. I thought my uncle’s wealth much greater than it is. He has deceived me—he has deceived us both: he deserves the consequence.” I was leaning my head on the table, my face was buried in my handkerchief. I only raised it to say, “ Deloraine, if you would have me listen to you—not a word of”—I could not utter my uncle’s name. He retracted, he entreated, he remonstrated. I was too wretched to wish to extend the wretchedness I felt. I promised, if ever I was admitted to my uncle’s presence, not to accuse him but myself. I was careless of resentment, for I was careless of life. I wished only to be forgiven and die.

At that time it was indeed probable that no solicitude could preserve my life: my strength was exhausted, and my fever increasing; the pain and confusion in my head were almost intolerable. I recollect, as in a dream, crossing the court of the castle, not speaking to any of the servants who crowded about me, for I had a confused idea that every one wanted to impede me; and placing myself silently at my uncle's door, and sinking down upon it, when I could stand no longer. I would not permit any one to approach or touch me; and they could not make me understand that he was asleep. In a few moments Deloraine came up; to the tones of his voice I was always sensible. "Ormsby," said he, "you must come away—you will die if you remain here in your present state." I smiled when he spoke of death. "Your uncle will not see you; why do you distress him, and exhaust yourself by this obstinacy?" I was silent, but did

not move. "Ormsby, dear Ormsby, listen to me, let me prevail with you." He knelt down beside me—I lay on the floor. "Your blood is heated, your temper is impetuous; so is De Lacy's—if he comes out, and sees you here, he may be provoked to some violence; you may be provoked by what no man can resist. If he should spurn you away, you will do some rash thing, you will hate yourself for it ever after. Don't stay here to expose yourself to usage which will degrade you if you don't resent it, and which you will repent all your life if you do."

Some of the servants who pitied me, interposed. They declared the De Lacy would never do good till he saw me again: that his heart would warm to the sight of me—that when he lay down the night before, he pronounced my name twice, and they heard him sigh heavily after his curtains were drawn. I heard every word with the clearest perception. I clung to the door

with all my strength, and repeated my own name in a voice which, though wild with delirium, he had not forgotten. He came out. He bent over me as I knelt at the door. He fell on my neck and wept.

For some months neither my health nor my intellects appeared likely to recover the shock they had received. To travel seventy miles through a bleak country in the rage of a fever, was a violence to nature from which no force of enthusiasm could protect it. I believe in any other state of mind it must have been fatal: even in mine it was nearly so. And when I recovered my faculties, it was only to look on life with disgust—it had nothing good for me. The sting of early and disappointed passion throbbed and rankled in my heart's core, yea in my heart of hearts. I became listless and dejected. The deep melancholy of passion baked my blood, and made it heavy and thick.

The dark red spot that burned for ever on my cheek, was no sign of health. I listened to no one. I was interested by nothing, except when a message of inquiry arrived from Montrevor House. I had no companion. Mr. Corbett had been removed to a small living at a distance; Hammond and his wife were in England. With Deloraine I took no counsel. Deloraine's power was merely that of exciting the spirits in health, and adding to the festivity of mirth. I loved him—loved him unreservedly. I had given but too strong proofs of my confidence in him, but there is a species of confidence high, and delicate, and sad, which I never could repose in Deloraine.

It was during this melancholy period of a struggle with ill health, in which I hardly wished to overcome, that my uncle, whose penetration I thought I had eluded, told me, almost in the language of a neglected writer, that I 'could not hide my purpose from my

narrow-searching friend.' It was the first time he ever mentioned, ever alluded to his own passion. I am not going to detail the melancholy confidence of posthumous affection, and of hopeless affection. There was little language in our short dialogue, but much intelligence. Neither importunity nor affection however drew from me the name of Lady Montrevor. I still retained my dread and shame of a guilty passion. I acknowledged I loved---loved without hope, loved I believed to death, but acknowledged no more: till touched by my uncle's solicitude, and firmly believing I had secured myself by the condition, I told him I would disclose the object when I had found myself sufficiently benefited by an excursion to the neighbourhood of the sea, to advert to the subject without an emotion which I then felt too much for me. He consented to the condition, and hurried my departure.

I went to the rock on the sea coast,

in the neighbourhood. Deloraine was still my companion: it was necessary he should be, for my lassitude had rendered me unfit for the commonest business of life. But in Deloraine's society there is no longer any danger. To me the name of pleasure was loathsome—I had never known more than the name.

I have now been here some weeks, and have felt under every change of place that 'the mind is its own place, and where can make a heaven of hell, an hell of heaven;' in mine both are so much mingled, the guilt of passion is soothed by such dreams of pleasure, and that pleasure so shadowed by fear and self-reproach, that if I were confident of ease in death, I would not wish to live.

Such was the account I gave my invisible correspondent; I will pursue it for you without interruption. From this state of apathy I was roused by a letter from my uncle. To pacify him I had sent him

flattering assurances of my health. He believed them, and claimed my promises on it. I was confounded, but could not retreat: with a faltering hand I traced these words at the end of a letter, in which I deprecated all assistance, all consolation.—“The cause of my dejection, the cause, I believe, of my death, when I die, is to be sought in Montrevor-House. I never have said or written so much to man before—I never will say or write more.” Yet, when I had written this, I felt relieved, gratified; compassion is soothing to the mind in every state; I deserved compassion, I was sure of my uncle’s, I was sure of more—of his sympathy.

While I was consoling myself for my confession, I received a letter, desiring my immediate presence at the castle. The expressions were remarkably strong. “I have worked wonders in your favor, come down immediately, you will not believe the joy that is preparing to welcome you;

I will tell you no more; come immediately to your affectionate uncle. M. De Lacy." It was written, as usual, by Father Cusack, but signed by the Chieftain.

I will not tell the state of mind in which I travelled; a state of solicitude and hope too wild and exquisite for description; in the wide range of possibility, what room was there for either? What could be done for me by man? But the visions that floated before me were sweeter from their shadowy and indefinite forms, from their wanting a local habitation and a name, from their actual impossibility, and fantastic reality. I arrived at the Castle, it was a dark autumnal evening, in the close of October: as long as light remained, I read and marked every character in my uncle's letter, and expounded it by every art in the cabbala of fancy, and held it to my heart to still its beatings, when I could read no longer.

I sprung out of the carriage; I asked

for my uncle; he had not expected me till the following night; he had set out for Montrevor-House, and had left orders that Deloraine and I should follow him, in the event of our arrival, which, however, he hardly expected.

With all the impatience and restlessness of my feelings, I yet could not avoid wishing to spare her the spectacle of my wasted figure—all ‘travel-stained,’ and I spent some moments at the Castle endeavouring to compose my feelings, and my appearance, which were almost as wild as Cardenie’s, his rags excepted. We proceeded to Montrevor-House; it was now night, and Deloraine could not see the red spot in my cheek, which burned hotter than ever. He was silent—unusually silent; I spoke to appease my own agitation, but my words were almost inarticulate. The circumstance of my uncle being at Montrevor-House gave a kind of domestic confidence to my feelings, which were again disturbed

by the singularity of his being there; he had never quitted the castle before, except on an invitation to Lemon-Grove.

We arrived; the servants appeared to expect our arrival. We were shown into the drawing-room; the family, who had not yet dined, were collected in it. The lights were blazing when we entered, and the company rose to receive us; my uncle advanced first. The sudden transition from darkness and cold, and confinement in a narrow vehicle, to the glare of light and splendor, and the confusion of figures and voices, scattered the little recollection I had struggled to obtain.— Lord and Lady Montrevor were advancing slowly across the wide drawing-room to say those conciliating nothings that nevertheless give the stranger breath and time; but my uncle, his natural impetuosity increased by his affection and triumph, exclaimed---“ This is no time for forms, we are too happy for them; Ormsby, you are

the first Irishman whose diffidence ever obstructed his happiness; but no English peer need blush at his connection with my heir, and you may be proud of a prize which it reflects honor on Ireland, that one of her native sons should win." As he spoke, he drew Miss Montolieu forward, who appeared sinking to the earth, and placed her cold and trembling hand in mine. I stood motionless for a moment. Had he been pronouncing a spell that converted both into stone, the effect could not have been stronger. At length, Miss Montolieu, who had vainly struggled to speak, tottered from us, and attempting to reach Lady Montrevor, sunk into her arms senseless. Nothing but this, and the tumult it caused, could have restored me.

Lady M. and the *gouvernante* assisted Miss M. My uncle accused his own vehemence, Lord M. made a speech suitable to the occasion, and I leaned on Deloraine, unable to speak, unwilling to

think. He whispered to me eagerly---

"For God's sake behave more like a man, a man of honor, a man of feeling; can you see a girl, a lovely delicate girl, who has avowed her love for you, sinking into the earth with her timidity at the avowal, and disconcert, and distress, and degrade her by this girlish waywardness yourself?"

During the whisper, a thought like the consciousness of this dreadful mistake rushed on me. I remembered the doubtful expressions of my letter, I remembered my having said that my affections were engaged by an object who resided at Montrevor-House. With that weakness of the mental eye which the contemplation of one object causes, I never dreamed that this expression could be interpreted of any other than Lady Montrevor, while my uncle, putting the more obvious construction on it, had applied it to Miss M. young, and lovely, and disengaged; had believed my expressions of despondency

to be merely the fantastic despondency of passion, had pleaded my imaginary cause with all the ardor of affection, and succeeded too well.

Miss M. was conveyed from the room, and my uncle's solicitude took another direction; he observed my pale and speechless looks; he approached me, and gave me some breathing time by lamenting his precipitation, and talking of the fatigue of travel, and the hurried spirits of an invalid. I permitted him to speak without interruption. He attempted to loosen my waistcoat; his hand touched the ribbon to which the cameo that I always wore in my bosom was suspended. I felt it; I was roused; I recollected myself; I uttered some faint words of assent. At this moment Lady M. in accompanying her daughter, passed me; I turned; I touched her veil; she passed on, but said in a voice perfectly distinct—'*Volto sciolto, i pensieri stretti.*' It seemed as if she was

addressing her daughter. Her voice was a sound that my feelings obeyed almost instinctively.

Lord M. now recalled his lady to inform her he heard the Bishop of Clonsfert's carriage, and whispered something about the ceremony being performed as soon as possible, that all the disagreeables might be terminated before dinner. "We need not waste the evening in sentiment and swooning; Miss M. had better try to compose herself and stay." Lady M. whispered something to my pale bride, who, after a moment's struggle, returned to her seat, leaning on her mother's arm, and when Lady M. attempted to resume her chair, she still held her hand, and motioned her inability to be without her.

I knew there was nothing extraordinary in this; that fashionable marriages were usually conducted with an expedition which was meant to exclude all intrusion from feeling. I felt it was on this occasion, it

was welcome, it was necessary ; I could not retreat, and the only mercy that could be now shewn me, was in a precipitation that did not compel me to speak, that did not allow me to think. I had no means—no time—I dared not think.

In the tumult of my thoughts something like a gleam of pleasure quivered fitfully. I was about to become a relative, an inmate, to see her daily without interruption and without reproach ; and something like a security in the solemn event that was about to take place ; something that seemed to place me beyond the reach of danger, but within that of indulgence, pleased, if it did not tranquilize me.

The bishop entered, a man in whose presence it was not easy to feel restraint. His address, blending facility with professional gravity, and his conversation displaying felicity with elegance, made his appearance a relief welcome to all. While the license was examining,

my uncle, who appeared to feel the benevolent disappointment of one who had purposed to heighten pleasure, and only obtained pain, said to me in a voice of constrained cheerfulness—"I perceive I am too much of a veteran to meddle with manœuvres; these light modern weapons don't fit my hands at all; I am too old and too awkward for them. I thought I had prepared a surprise for you that would have reflected honor on my generalship, and instead of that I have only surprised Miss M. and you out of your senses I think. Immediately on receiving your letter," he continued, drawing me to his chair, "I proposed to Lord M. a match between Miss M. and you; I had little fears that he would decline it, though you were so full of fears about it." I sighed, but he set the sigh down to the error-side of the account again; "Lord M. assented, the lady assented"—and Lady Montrevor, said I tremulously, "Oh, she assented too, though she seemed somewhat more sur-

prised than I could have expected at so natural a circumstance as your being in love with a very beautiful girl, and amiable and interesting too, though she is the daughter of an Englishman. Every thing was soon adjusted ; fortune was not my object, I knew it was not yours. In the triumph of my heart I wrote to you, but concealed the extent of your happiness, for I wished to pour it on you in a flood of joy at once. I have been unskilful, or unfortunate, I believe I must say with Lear—*I am old and foolish*. I have only disturbed and distressed where I meant to—to make too happy. The feelings of a female and an invalid are materials too delicate for me to deal with. But, Ormsby, you should remember that blushing and trembling is the privilege of the bride, not the bridegroom.”

I struggled to recover some composure ; yet there is a kind of solemn and inarticulate pantomime performed on those oc-

casions, that intimates all is ready, though no one knows how to say so; in preference to which I was anxious to encounter the ceremony itself. We stood up, Lord M. supported his daughter with pompous politeness; Lady M. drew her veil over the lower part of her face, and stood at some distance, in an attitude whose ambitious elegance spoke too much ease. The ceremony went on; I had no ring; my uncle produced one, a large, costly, old-fashioned one, into which two of Athanasia's fingers might have gone, and gave it with a whispered wish that it might be an auspicious omen; it was the ring he had prepared for his own marriage.

As the fiat words were pronounced, Lady M. dropped her veil, her eyes were fixed on me, but their expression was calm and searching. I could have said with Eloisa, "Not on the cross my eyes were fixed, but you."

I remember nothing till I heard the mur-

mur of congratulation about me ; my pale shrinking bride was consigned to arms that as they enfolded her trembled like her own. I led her to her father's feet with sufficient composure to spare us the repetition of the attitude ; Lady M. advanced as we knelt before her lord ; something between a prayer and a compliment was murmured by both. Lady M. extended her hand to her daughter, I pressed it ; there was agony in the pressure ; it was the last impulse of passion that I obeyed.

The examination of papers, &c. protracted dinner till past eight. I was impatient for it—I was impatient for wine, which I swallowed in large quantities. I gradually acquired a kind of false and heated courage ; I was wounded by the easy hauteur of Lady M. : from the moment the ceremony concluded, she had become herself again ; her conversation and maniere were unusually sparkling ; the determined and incessant blaze of her

wit was like a *feu d'artifice*; she talked of the classics with the bishop, and of the ancient regime with my uncle, who listened to her with delight, and declared she reminded him of the brightest ornaments of the *vielle cour* in its brightest period.—

“ There was certainly much more dignity in the appearance of women in those times in particularly that of matrons. It is really melancholy to see the distress of our antiquated belles at present, who imagine they can renew their youth like the serpent, by casting off their coil. They have received some comfort, however, from the construction of the modern corsets, which envelope the whole person, and now, in complete steel, they revisit the glimpses of the moon, making night hideous. A woman d'un certain age, grows so glaring in her dress, they will not remember that the ancients made the dove, not the peacock, the companion of beauty. My lord, (addressing the bishop) does not your

favorite Homer give the epithet of venerable to Hebe? Good G—d ! how ridiculous a venerable Hebe must be. But we never know how to remit our claims to admiration ; we lose the substance of respect attempting to retain our title to vanity, even when no more than its shadow remains.”

I knew well what all this meant ; it was said to the company, but at me. I continued to sit with the gentlemen as long as they remained in the dining-room. It was late when the bishop and my uncle retired. From that time Lady M. seemed to think exertion no longer necessary. Lord M.’s maniere diplomatique was of use to us ; he provided cards, as we were a partie quarrée, and as it was en famille, and we could not be too moderate, mentioned guinea casino. Athanasia and I lost sixteen guineas ; as she paid her debt to her father, he drew a beautiful antique from his finger, worth double that sum, and

put it on the hand she extended to him, declaring there was a spell in it that ensured success. Lady M. as she rose, said "Mr. Bethel, you play extremely well, but you shuffle a little too much." I found it was arranged before my arrival, that we should remain a fortnight at Montrevor-House.

The mode of living was perfectly without restraint, and the establishment uncomfortably splendid. Breakfast remained on the table from eleven till three—generally untouched, for Lord and Lady M. who occupied separate apartments, breakfasted in their dressing-rooms, and Miss Montolieu seule with her governess at an earlier hour; an habit that Athanasia and I, weary of breakfasting in pompous solitude among a suite of attendants, adopted in a few mornings. Lord M. occupied the whole morning in receiving and answering letters from England—had hardly time to swallow some ham pie, and half a bottle of champagne, before he sent to request

her ladyship would have the goodness to accompany him in an airing. Her ladyship, for what reason it was difficult to discover, never presumed to decline his requests, though her compliance she endeavoured to make as painful to him as it was evidently to herself. She never rose till this summons, and then hastily throwing on her morning dress and pelisse, and enveloping herself in her veil, she flung herself into the family cage, as she called the carriage, insisted on his lordship's keeping on the perch opposite to her, took a book always with her to prevent the least appearance of attention to her companion, and then declaring that she was ready to act her part in the comedy of 'False Appearances' to the whole county, in the true Thespian itinerant style;—sat back in the carriage, and amused herself, eluding the gazers as the splendid equipage passed along. Lord M.'s object was evidently to gain the

respect of the country by appearing the best and happiest of husbands and of men. His lady's was evidently to defeat that and every other object as far as she dared; for he appeared to hold over her a secret and powerful influence, with which she struggled only to shew all the will of resistance, but only the power of submission.

The excursion terminated only when the light failed to show Lord and Lady Montrevor in the same carriage to all that pleased to see, and when the family-cage dismissed its unsocial turtles. About three hours were allowed for dressing for dinner, which made its appearance about seven, to a company of never less than twenty persons, for without company Lord M. could not exist.

He had contrived to render existence tolerable by finding, to a range of about thirty miles, families such as may always be found in Ireland, to whom the most

exquisite wines are necessary, and high play welcome; these orgies usually protracted the entertainments till three or four in the morning, unless when a certain set were assembled, and his lordship determined by any means to please all, was suddenly converted, like Comus, from a late wassailer into an admirer of "heavenly harmony;" and her ladyship and her daughter exhibited in song and attitude and recitation till all power of admiration was exhausted, and the family of Montrevor were pronounced the "most charming, the most amiable, the most happy family in the world."

Our marriage, which was immediately announced, produced a new display of pomp and felicity in the entertainments given at Montrevor-House, and by the neighbouring families, in honor of the event. Lord M. insisted on the propriety of accepting them all; Lady M. contended and complied; and I was con-

gratulated and envied, till I almost began to believe that he whom all the world pronounces happy, ought to try to think himself so. The feminine and fairy beauty of Athanasia, the timidity with which she hung on my arm when oppressed by the gaze of admiration, her helpless and appealing looks, her silence, that spoke to my heart and told me it wanted love for her, and certain sources of pleasure and confidence which our new state had put us in possession of, filled me with melancholy and delicious sensations towards her. I pitied her, and my pity was melting into love; yet my anguish was at times insupportable. To be under the roof with Lady M. had yet given me no opportunity of speaking to her; I could only look, and to look was more dangerous than ever: for, either in honor of her daughter's nuptials, or from some other cause, her beauty was at this period more rich and

resplendent than I had ever seen it with bodily or even mental eye before.

A few days after our marriage, I had returned from visiting my uncle, and depressed by the effort I had made to hide my depression, I was hastening to beg Athanasia "with a kind and favorable hand, to whisper music to my weary spirit." I knew her harp stood in her dressing-room, and that she was accustomed with a voluptuous indolence to touch the chords from time to time while extended, reading, on the sofa. I passed through it; I entered the bed-chamber; through the half-drawn curtains I had a glimpse of a female writing, with her back to me; it was Lady M. "Hush," said she, pointing to the bed, "there sleeps Titania, (a favorite diminutive by which I called Athanasia, when I wished to teach my heart tenderness for her,) she is tired of all this tumult; you must dine at —— without us to-day,

and we will try to be stupid and comfortable in my dressing-room." She paused a moment, and then apparently wishing to account for her presence there, said "As Mrs. B. did not come at the usual hour to my dressing-room, I came at an unusual one to her's; she told me she was trying to get a little rest, and when I found she was asleep, I feared to disturb her by attempting to quit the room, and as there were writing materials here"—

I begged I might not disturb her. She resumed her writing. I seated myself opposite her, repeating her excuse for not quitting the room. I had hardly heard what she said. I only thought of the opportunity, and that it might never return: even had my passion been extinguished, I owed an explanation to my honor. But it was not; and while I gazed on her lovely forehead and brows, which were all I could see as she bent

over the table, and the motion of her white fingers, I felt an agony of passion that almost made me incapable of reason. I had rather have been permitted to gaze on her thus for ever, than to have folded in my arms all the beauty of the earth. My despair gave me courage. After some ineffectual attempts, I at length articulated "Lady Montrevor—will you—can you listen to me for a moment?" She laid down her pen, but without raising her eyes, and seemed to read what she had been writing. I drew near the table. "Is this attention?—but no matter—I deserve—no I do not, by Heaven, I do not deserve it." I leaned on the table; I covered my face with my hand; the tears burst from my eyes; they dropt on the paper. She raised her head, "Mr. Bethel, what am I to understand by this?" "That I am miserable." "You are at least quite inexplicable." "Is it possible you can believe, you can

think I am—What circumstances?—Have you so little knowledge of the human heart; of mine, whose inmost recesses you knew”—“I know nothing—What can I know—What can I think? I thought “when first I saw Alonzo’s tears, I knew their meaning well,” but when I find them shed for my daughter, and when I find them wiped by the fairest hand in the world except my own, what am I to think? you know I had no hand to give to dry them with.” Her softness gave me breath, gave me composure. I begged her to listen to me. “No, no, no—not now; it is no matter. I cannot listen, I ought not to listen.” “You ought, you must, in justice, in mercy, by Heaven you shall listen, or you make me wild.” “Hush, you will waken Athanasia.” “No matter, she must be awakened some time or other.” “But not by me; farewell.” I grasped her hand, I held her by force, I told her

all in a voice of suppression and agony.

“ Now mock me with your pitiless contempt if you will, but listen to me; though my thoughts of you are as pure as if I were your brother, your son, yet without your compassion, without something more soft, more favorable, in your feelings towards me than bare complacency than that cruel politeness of which you are too much a mistress, I will not, will not live---I feel I cannot.”

A long pause ensued, “ This is all very extraordinary,” said she, averting her head; “ but I have an implicit, an involuntary dependance on you; you have never deceived me; I must believe you, I must pity you; but I believe I must not tell you so. But we must think of this no more---never more---it is impossible, and horrid, and never to be mentioned, never thought on again. You wish for my regard; you may rely on it: the regard which I felt for you as a

stranger, will not be much diminished by your becoming a relative; a relative so domestic---so---as my daughter's husband." I attempted to kiss the hand I held, she withdrew it. "There must be no more of this; I have gone too far already. No woman ever had less of false prudery about her, perhaps too little, but there is a length to which neither false nor true delicacy will suffer one to go. I was too much pleased with you, perhaps; if I was I am sufficiently punished for it. But, remember that our present situation does not exclude any thing that could reasonably have existed between us."

As she spoke, she resumed her seat, and examined the paper as if to recall the ideas my intrusion had broken off. I sat down beside her, her motions instinctively prompted mine. "Don't be afraid," said she, "as I see you may be trusted. I will venture to tell you that

this sleep is produced by laudanum, and will not be easily broken; her nerves are in a wretched state, they frightened me into giving her my drops, and the effect has been this deep lethargic sleep. I was writing, when you came in, to Mr. Corbett; my mind is in a strange state; we, I mean my lord, has just received the intelligence which directly and indirectly he has been expecting since our banishment to the Siberia of the British dominions. A splendid appointment has been made out for him, and he is to be recalled in a few days to England, and to wear all his blushing honors thick upon him again. He has been struggling for this I know ever since his arrival in Ireland. Getting the county for George, and fixing the reign of his popularity here, were, I knew, merely devices pour tuer le temps, for time is always a formidable thing to a man of fashion. I really imagined, that after the blow we had re-

ceived, all his castle-building, his plans, and elevations, as the architects say, was the baseless fabric of a vision; but affairs, I find, have taken another turn. My eldest son, Mr. Montolieu, a man whom, if ever you know him, as I hope you will, you will love and revere; a man of the first integrity and talents, has acquitted himself so ably in a very difficult negociation with a certain northern court, that he is become highly consequential as a political character, has made the first essay of his consequence by informing the ministry that he will retain his present situation only on the condition of his family's restoration to their late distinguished situation. Now Lord Castle-Wycomb, by his present dispatches, endeavours to prove that it has been all his doing; Lord Castle-Wycomb is precisely the man to avoid doing any thing, and to take the credit of doing every thing. But, "Aurelian's word

for a thousand pound," I am convinced we owe it entirely to him, if it can be called an obligation, to be precipitated again into what I wish, I wish (said she with energy,) I had never, never been impelled to the verge of—I have told you my mind is in a strange state; for this strange confidence I expect to be repaid by your regard, your respect. I have done nothing yet to forfeit yours; I wish I could say so of my own. I am writing to Mr. Corbett. That man has attained a great influence over my mind, merely from the circumstance of my believing that he would exert it exclusively for my best interests. I am telling him what I hardly dare to tell myself—that I long, with all the perverse longing of a woman, to return to London, to blaze out once more with a splendor that shall strike envy and enmity blind, shall blast them with excess of light; and then, if he thinks proper, re-

tire for ever. My mind is intolerably depraved. I acknowledge, I feel it; it astonishes me. Yet I cannot conceal it from myself: I mean all my better feelings are gone. I am now only alive to the wish to charge once more through the whole host of foes that have had time to cluster and collect together, to scatter them to all the corners of the drawing-room, to overwhelm them with my contempt and their own, and then to do whatever Providence and Mr. Corbett please. I know I am a lost creature, I know you ought to despise me for every thing except my confidence in you. But to triumph once more over Lady Delphina Orberry, and the Rees, and all the rest, once more to turn their own weapons against the wretches whose praise and whose ridicule have alike destroyed me, and then to "put out the lights and then" ---be forgotten for ever, or only remembered as the Lady Montrevor whose last

struggles flashed the most splendid radiations, like the fish of the Roman banquet---to do that, I would lose my own applause, that could be lost more than once in one's life---I would almost lose Mr. Corbett's. I know it is the ambition of a mind depraved by fashionable folly and vice, and so is mine; I know it is the ambition of a miserable mind, and so is mine---till my next winter in London I mean."

I was silent in my astonishment and compassion. "You are wondering now at the difference between my lord and me. He did nothing but talk of these things, I only felt them---it is the difference between a strong and a weak mind; but both our minds are inveterately abused by the world. However I will write to Mr. Corbett, and I will read his answer, and that is engaging for a vast deal, for when he writes, "conviction closes his periods."

The day was insufferably tedious: Lord M. always declamatory, now actually raved of the vindication of his honors, and character, &c. &c. hinted that by this time he believed the cabinet had felt their want of him, that no inducement could prevail on him, to quit retirement but that attachment to his country and zeal for her interests, which would not permit him to withdraw his services at a time that his recal testified their importance. "But we must all," said his lordship, "sacrifice our inclinations to our duty, and mine unfortunately forbids my remaining in a country which I shall ever remember with affection and regret." This solemn sadness affected the whole company; they really regretted the loss of splendor and festivity, such as they had witnessed at Montrevor-House, and such as they believed had been exhibited purely from regard for his Irish friends. Not even in the carriage returning did his

lordship forbear, "bestowing all his tediousness upon me." And I listened to his public spirit, and sufferings, and sacrifices, till the step of the carriage was let down, and then he paused to finish his last sentence, ore rotundo, before he alighted.

No circumstances ever induced Lord M. to violate decorum, and he repaired to the drawing-room, to hope her ladyship and Mrs. Bethel found themselves better, before he retired to his closet to examine and answer a variety of important letters, he had received that morning, "with the purport of which I shall have the honor of acquainting you, Lady M. when I have in some measure arranged the multiplicity of business, which compels me to deny myself the pleasure of your society this evening." Her ladyship was looking over some letters as he spoke. "Stay, my lord, stay I beg for one moment, this is a letter from Lady Castle-Wycomb,

and the contents are such as you ought to be apprized of immediately. Mr. B. there is no occasion for your quitting the room, you are one of us you know. As Major O'Flaherty says in the play, we shall all be related presently. Your daughter, my lord, is going to be married." "What daughter?" "Your only daughter unmarried, except Ida, who is in the nursery, for some time; your daughter Miss Montolieu, who is in London with Castle-Wycomb, and who is shortly to be Countess of Westhampton, a title which your lordship may remember, I bore unworthily for some years. Upon my word Lady Castle-Wycomb seems to inherit all the diplomatique talents of her family. She must have managed like the match-making Mrs. Steinhope in *Belinda*." "Lady M. I beg you to recollect, this is no time, no subject for badinage." "There is a better reason, my lord, which is that I am in no humour for

badinage; marriage is with me, un sujet plus triste pour faire badinage; there is the letter, satisfy your incredulity or credulity, for if you can believe Lady Castle-Wycomb to have effected it as she says, it would be hard to call you incredulous. Mr. B. have the goodness to trim that lamp, and assist in flashing conviction on his lordship." "This is very extraordinary and very desirable—and very, very extraordinary," said his lordship to himself, as he read the letter. "Among a packet of congratulatory epistles that I got from my dear five hundred friends," said Lady M. "on the late arrangement, my daughters thought proper to send me forms of thanksgiving suitable to the occasion, which I thought proper or pleasant not to read, till Mrs. B. looking over them perceived the intelligence extraordinary of this marriage, which is to take place in a few days, and which they hope will be honored with our pre-

sence, &c. &c. &c. I wish to Heaven there were printed forms for family occasions. I have not Lady Castle-Wycomb's happy art of combining a brazen style with characters as fair as wax." This allusion to the classic mode of writing was entirely lost on his lordship, who entreating leave to peruse the letter in his closet, retired with a profound bow to the ladies, and a recommendation of them to my attention for the evening.

Lady M. was in extravagant spirits, she sprung from the sopha, and trod the room with the lightness of a sylph. "Well, Mr. B. I have determined every thing, as I always do, in a moment, it was vastly lucky, I had time to determine for you in the same interval; you must go to England, we must all go to England, to London I should say, for as London stands for the whole world in some vocabularies, it may be allowed inclusively to stand for England. I will

not write to Mr. Corbett. I will not trust myself to read his answer, till I am determined to quit England, (that is the world) finally, and then he shall have all the credit of fixing my resolution. I must go—I ought to go to be present on this occasion, and a thousand other occasions that may occur. I must go to witness, or to increase Lady Westhampton's blushes—it was the classic costume for mothers, you know, to bear the torch or the train at their daughter's nuptials, and for once I am content to take an omen for my expedition from Hope.”

Athanasia was listlessly examining the impressions of the seals of letters that lay out the table. I approached her, “Should you like to go to London, my love?” “I fear I should not be able, my spirits are in a wretched state, and I dread the sea at this time of the year.” “Oh you must not talk of spirits,” said Lady M. whom nothing, when she pur-

sued a favorite object, could resist, “we can call spirits from the vasty deep you know.” “It is those spirits I dread,” said Athanasia. “Oh dread nothing in the world. You see I fear nothing, not even myself, whom of all beings I have most reason to dread. Mais n’importe, where there is no danger, there is no glory.” She paused a moment; as she was walking rapidly along the room, she struck her forehead. “And there is danger, and such danger?” Her voice became hollow, but in a moment she burst out in a voice of struggling gaiety, “qual pollor, qual tema—son regina, son guerriera. Yes I must sing, “Son Regina,” before a London audience once more, and you must accompany me, Athanasia. Bravura was always my forte. Allons mes enfans à la gloire; you see I know the difference between allez and allons, which was said to have lost a French general a battle once.” “And will the effort terminate in

‘la pace del core,’ said I, adverting to the words of Catalani’s celebrated song; she did not appear to hear me. “Now, Mr. B. that I have convinced myself at least of the absolute necessity of my going to London, I must convince you, which I shall immediately do by argument, which I always reserve for the service of my friends. I decide on my own measures, and deliberate on theirs. Mr. B. you must go to London, it is the place for you, the place for every man of talent, there is nothing done here, a kind of mental absenteism pervades this country. If you expect to distinguish yourself among your countrymen, or to be of service to them, you must first make yourself of consequence to the leading men; there is a great deal in being on the spot, as Lord M. I suppose can tell you. There is a kind of respect, a kind of expectation, and room, made for Irishmen of talent by the union; they are brought into

closer contact with the first men in England, the comparison has been favorable to them in the very point in which it has been made; they certainly possess more oratorical powers than the English speakers. If you get into the house, you must distinguish yourself, perhaps if you do not, you may distinguish yourself still more. At all events, in or out you can only be distinguished in England; this is a most important juncture for you and for the country; the ministry has just been changed, the present premier avowed his disapprobation of the union, and is known to be fond of this country, and of every thing belonging to it. I need not tell you that there is even some idea of petitioning under his auspices for a repeal of the act of union; this is the time for an Irishman to make himself conspicuous, on one side or the other, no matter which, to me I mean. Principles I know are very pretty things for those who

have them, they should always be the foundation of the political structure, and always be kept out of sight. Now Mr. B. that I have placed you in the very centre of the political world, let me congratulate you and myself on your distinction, and warn you, to render yourself of general consequence. Do not confine yourself to one limited direction, do not appear to be looking for a place, let men be compelled to look for a place for you. If you stoop in your course, to pick up the gilded fruits of profit, you will infallibly lose the race. And now that every thing is arranged, let us call for supper, for though politicians may resemble theameleon in their hue, they cannot be said like them to live upon air, as you will one day be convinced by all your senses at a ministerial dinner, especially if you sit near my Lord Montrevor."

There was so much matter mixed with madness in this whimsical speech, that I

listened as to sober and deliberate advice. I determined to go to London. I possessed wealth and rank and connexions; my mind wanted an object; that which Lady M. had pointed out was one capable of filling the most enlarged one. That she had pointed it out, magnified its importance, and palliated its improbability. She too was going to the great theatre where of distinction, if I ever became conspicuous, she would witness it. She had suggested it. "Ah si ma dame me voyoit," was the cry of an ancient knight of chivalry, on rushing into an engagement—it is the cry of ambition and love. I had exercised some research, and collected some materials during my residence in Ireland, such as were not unworthy the notice of a public-minded man; my melancholy had made them worthless to me, but I determined to review and recover them. I determined yet to do—to be, something worthy of myself, of my uncle, of Lady Montrevor.

In a few days we were to have concluded our engagements in the country by passing a month at the Castle of De Lacy; this period was hastened by the evident impatience of Lord M. to quit "this cursed country," of which he had now no motive to conceal his contempt. I was standing at the drawing-room window, looking at some new horses which were drawing the carriage round the lawn in training for the expedition to Dublin, when Lady M. said to me abruptly, "Have you been at the Castle?" the name by which the ruinous tower inhabited by the stranger went in the neighbourhood. I assented, "And seen the Castle-Spectre?" said she. I told her I had, and mentioned the extraordinary circumstances under which I had twice met him; that I frequently since endeavoured to obtain a sight of him, but in vain, though I knew that he still inhabited his solitary tower, and still

visited the poor of the country for a range of twenty miles.

The conversation plunged her into a reverie; it was interrupted by dreadful intelligence; my uncle, under whose roof we were to have passed that night, was no more! He had been found dead in his bed by his usual attendant; he appeared to have died placidly in his sleep; there was no appearance of struggle or violence in his departure. A small black circle was said to be visible round his throat, but the appearance was such as usually attends those who die in a fit.

Lord M. after some formal expressions of concern, advised me immediately to go and examine his papers to discover the will, as he feared the deceased was by no means in the habit of regular arrangements in business. I listened to him with an apathy of distress, which at last impelled him to undertake the commission himself, accompanied by

legal attendance. His suspicions were groundless, the will was found. I was sole heir to a property whose immediate amount was nearly 5000*l.* per annum, but which his lordship pronounced might be nearly doubled by proper management. My first object was to make amends to Deloraine, for the wealth of which I had deprived him by appointing him my agent. I settled an annuity on Father Cusack. Nothing is more insipid than the detail of the disposal of wealth, except to those on whom it is bestowed. I did many things rashly, and neglected much that I ought to have done. For many days I could only weep on my uncle's grave.

With a singularity that marked his character, he had requested that his heir would not assume his name. To be the first or the last of the De Lacys, he said was an equal honor. Lord M. who saw, and Lady M. who felt my dejection, united in a request that Athanasia and I

would remain at Montrevor House, instead of visiting the melancholy castle, till we were enabled to join them in London, where we purposed following at the beginning of December.

After the interval of a week had enabled Lord M. to observe all the decencies of grief, they left Montrevor House. On the eve of their departure Lady M. was unusually thoughtful; Lord M. had retired to his closet to give orders, her ladyship was sealing some notes, Athanasia was reclining on the sofa, listless with an indisposition on which the sufferer is usually congratulated, there was no sound except the joyful officiousness of the servants, who felt scarce less delight than their superiors at the repeal of their banishment. I had taken up the seal which Lady M. had been employing, "Do you admire it?" said she, looking up at me. A foolish speech was on my lips, I checked it, and observed soberly that the execution was beautiful. If you admire it, have

the goodness to consider it as your own, but not gratuitously, you must give me for it one which I observe you wear in your bosom." "I will never give it to human being." "Except me, you must give it to me—the loss of memory is no injury when it only revives things that ought to be forgotten, and I have made you a much more auspicious present in that seal, if you will examine it, which I perceive you have not done yet, though you have admired it." Her manner was mild, but absolute. I took the seal, the impression was a figure of time plucking the pinions of love, with the quaint sentiment of some French writer for the motto. *L'amitié est l'amour sans ailes.*"

During the interval that Athanasia and I past alone at Montrevor House, I had more leisure to observe her character and disposition; it was marked by an indolent and voluptuous melancholy, that seemed the result of some cause, deeper

than I had yet discovered. That she loved me I could not doubt, for why else had she yielded to the solicitations of my uncle to marry me? Yet my love appeared insufficient to satisfy and to sooth her. I ascribed this to a female fastidious exquisiteness of feeling; I ascribed it to my own, perhaps visible, defect in ardent tenderness; I ascribed it to a situation which distressing to every part of female life, has unusual distress for a novice of fifteen. I could not suspect Athanasia of want of affection, for I had seen her lavish the most exaggerated marks of it on her governess, a woman who appeared to me of the most worthless character, but who managed the affections of youth with all the address of her country, and I had seen her dissolved in tears, and almost dying in her mother's arms, on the eve of her departure.

Too fond still of hearing her name repeated, in a moment of confidence I observed to Athanasia my sur-

prize at the affection, which on my admission into the family I perceived to exist between her and her mother, of which not the slightest mark could be observed by a stranger, or in public. She told me it was her mother's pride to suppress her feelings in public, she dreaded the impeachment of her fashionable character, she dreaded the suspicion of affection or duty, she inverted the ancient maxim, and was not depraved, but wished to appear so. "I was the fifth daughter, and never recollect seeing my mother for more than a moment at a time, till we lived in Ireland; my three elder sisters were married; the fourth, who is I suppose by this time Lady Westhampton, preferred remaining in England with my sister, Lady Castle-Wycomb. I preferred coming to Ireland, I wished to be known to my mother, and to be loved by her. I had read Genlis's beautiful works," (she had formed her ideas exclusively on the

French writers) I longed for an opportunity of being near her, when her heart was softened by solitude, when her mornings were no longer filled up with lounging in Bond-street, or dashing through the Park, when she must have her children about her, because the loungers at her morning levee were no more. My amusement when we came to this dreadful country was listening to Bennet, my mother's femme, in the intervals of her attendance on her lady, telling of former grandeur and festivity, and of our sudden fall into the horrors of Ireland. I who lived in the nursery, as Lady Westhampton was but just come out, could hardly perceive any difference, except that I was no longer called your ladyship, and the term Miss sounded shockingly to my ears at first. The stories she told me of my mother interested me deeply, in spite of the artlessness of the narrator who only wished to magnify her

lady's grandeur, I could see her lady was miserable in spite of her grandeur. One day I prevailed on Bennet, to let me sit in her lady's room while she was asleep; she awoke, but her head was confused with laudanum, and she did not perceive a different voice answered her when she called for her coffee, which she took as often in the day as Bonaparte. I brought it to her, and withdrew her curtain, trembling for the success of my attempt, she saw me. "Miss Montolieu, is that you?" "Yes, mamma—it is Athanasia. Are you surprized, are you displeased at my attending you instead of Bennet?" Tears, which I could not repress, were in my eyes. She was affected or surprized, or—she gave me permission to visit her every morning—not like the cold dressing-room visits we used to pay. But she charged me never to let any one know this concession, and directed me to behave with the same ease to her before

strangers, that the rest of her family did.

“I wish for nothing more now,” said she,

“and if I did, I could not obtain it.”

The conversation affected Athanasia too much ; she was formed for tears and softness, she wept alike for grief and joy, and tenderness, but wiped her tears.

“I wish,” said she, “you could hear Bennet with her naïveté tell of the terrible night as she calls it, when we quitted London.”

“I should much rather hear you, my love.” She assumed the maniere of the narrator with a dramatic facility that astonished me. “Now you must imagine me Bennet, and now you must imagine me Miss Montolieu,” said she.—“Provided the latter be only in imagination,” said I.

“If you will really tell it to us, Bennet, put out the candles, for I love to listen to what interests me by a dim dying fire-light, on a winter evening, while the wind is moaning low and distantly. My story is melancholy enough without

darkness, but I will tell you all I recollect. Oh it was a terrible time, so sudden, so like a thunder-bolt, yet I remember every thing as distinctly as if it took up years in happening.

You saw my lord or my lady very seldom I believe, Miss Montolieu. You were kept principally with the younger children at Richmond. But you must have known what all the world knew, that my lady was the greatest dasher in the world. Oh nothing was ever like her wit and beauty, and fascination. No, no lady was ever like my lady. "But we want to know how your lady came to be what she is now?" "Nothing ever was so sudden, Ma'am, it was just after the great entertainments on Mr. Bellamy's marriage, and people had not half done wondering at my lady having married three of her daughters, and being the first fashionable belle in the world herself, when, it was one day that there was to be a private dinner-

party in Curzon-street, and they were to go to the opera, and then—to an hundred places. I shall never forget the first hint of it, I was just going to my lady's dressing-room before dinner, when I heard Mr. Geale, my lord's gentleman, say to one of the footmen, "Did he say he must see my lord?" "He did, he said he would call day or night, or morning, but he must see my lord, for the business was indispensable." "And what did my lord say?" "He said he must dine with the club, but if possible he would return about one o'clock." "Then the business must be indispensable," said Mr. Geale. I heard all this, but how little I thought of it! My lady was in high spirits dressing, and put on an immensity of rouge; I asked her if Lord Roschamp was not to be one of the party. "Yes," said she, "and another, and another, and another, and the last fool is welcome as the former." But I was so used to hear my lady talk poetry, I did not mind her. I

sat reading in my lady's room till it was late, and then I went down to order some exotics to be removed into her dressing room, that she had spoken about, but the moment I entered the servants' hall, I saw there was something extraordinary, there was whispering, and murmuring, and such looks cast on me, as if every one was afraid, and longing to tell some terrible thing.

I had not power to ask a question, but glided away just like a poor moping ghost; but just as I was crossing the corridor, I saw Mr. Geale going into my lord's dressing room to light the lamp that stood on the chimney-piece, for it was near one o'clock, and the person was to meet my lord there.

“ So I thought I would follow him and hear something, but he was so sullen and shy, and appearing to be very busy, but not looking in my face when I spoke to him. At last, he comes up to a map of

the grounds in Cumberland, that had just been sent up by some prospect maker to my lord, and says he, "My lord will be spared the trouble of any further improvements here." "What do you mean by that, Mr. Geale?" said I; so he turned away very short, and began cutting off the gilt edges of some paper, that had not the coronet on its corners, as my lord had ordered, and so he had given it to his gentleman. "After all," says he, "this may do for my lord, well enough." "Dear Mr. G." says I, "what do you mean?" "Mrs. B." says he, "I dare not tell you." "Oh then," says I, "you must tell me." Just as he was beginning to look a little complying, a tall, dark, muffled figure stalked into the room. I retreated in a moment. But I was soon to hear more than Mr. G. could have told me.

My lady returned as usual between four and five. She was in high spirits still, and looked long at herself before she

let me take off her dress. "The reflexion of this glass is remarkably good," said I. "Yes," said my lady, "it assists me to bear my own." Just as she was in bed, a message came from my lord requesting my lady's company to breakfast in the morning. I thought this a terrible sign, I had never known it happen before, in the eighteen years I lived in the family. However I gave my lady the message. "Tell my lord I shall be unwell," said my lady. "Then he will request leave to breakfast with you, my lady." "Then tell him I shall have a select dejeune tomorrow, and cannot have him." "Can I give him both these messages, my lady?" "Aye and any thing more you will," said my lady. I was going to argue, but my lady bid me give her the laudanum, and hold my tongue. So I gave Mr. G. as sensible a message as I could, which in five minutes was answered by a sealed note from my lord. I gave it, my lady

read it several times, holding her hand over her profile, and then told me, she would see my lord at twelve. "Here are the drops, my lady," said I. "I do not want them now," said my lady. I went to my own room, and my heart felt strange and heavy, it seemed to me as if I had but just lain down, when I heard the bell ring violently.

I got up and hurried to my lady's room, I could not believe my eyes, there was my lady completely dressed without a living creature to assist her, and it scarce ten o'clock. "Get breakfast in my dressing room," said she speaking very quick, "and let my lord know I am waiting for him, admit no one while we are together, nor come near me till I ring."

I was so amazed, that I looked I suppose like an oaf, for my lady smiled. "Stay," said she, "a moment, and do not walk in your sleep, for I perceive your eyes are scarce open."

My lord and my lady were together several hours—the servants whispered, and I wondered: Mr. G. was the only person I could communicate myself to, and he would not communicate any thing with me. “Come Bennet,” said my lady, when she rung for me, “dress me in a moment, they dine horridly early at the Duke’s, they might call it a *dejeuner a la fourchette*.” I dressed her with trembling hands. It was so usual for my lord and lady to dine at different places, that we never minded it. But my lady had not been gone two hours, I was just laying out her ornaments against she came home, to go to a party, when twenty thundering knocks came to the door in the same moment, and in the next I heard Mr. G. calling me to come to my lord directly. I ran down, talking all the way to Mr. G. who did not answer me one word, but wrung his hands distractedly. I followed him to my lord’s

dressing room, he was tossing over some papers, he looked like a demoniac. "Is your lady out?" said he. I could not speak. "Tell her," said he, in a dreadful voice, "to return no more, tell her she is without a title, a fortune, a name, an husband." He started up, I thought he was going to kill me. I caught hold of Mr. G. and fell into fits. I do not know how long it lasted, but when I recovered, I thought I was in a new world. Oh the ruin, so sudden, so utter, so desperate that I saw in a moment that all was ruined, and my lady and I ruined for ever. All the servants were scattered, every one grasping at what they could get. All the great rooms dark and empty, or filled with horrid gruff-looking fellows, that put me in mind of all I had ever read of jails or inquisitions; all the rich furniture taken down, and oh the dismay, and the darkness, and the hurry, and the tumult! The porter had gone, and all the lamps in the

hall and corridor were gone, and ten tall fellows as big and as black as the great bronze figures that used to hold the tripods on the stairs, were stationed in the hall, scowling at us as if they could kill us with a look. And then the horrid jargon they talked, and the distress of the lower servants, and the French servants who knew nothing of what was passing, oh I never ! never shall forget it.

In vain I asked for explanation, or for patience, or for mercy ; all I could hear was, that my lord was ruined and fled, and my lady was ruined, and was at the concert, and the children were ruined, and knew nothing about it. And that there were executions on the furniture, to four times its value, and with their castles and seats, the family would not have an house by morning to cover their heads. As soon as I could stand, I ran up to my lady's apartments, before the rogues thought of it, and every thing of value

that could be secured about the person, I secured for my lady. Just at this time Mr. Bellamy ran breathless into the hall; he had come from Chelsea where he and Mrs. B. were, upon the first intelligence. Oh I clung to him as I could to my own brother, and we asked each other fifty questions in a breath. "Where is your lord?" "He is gone to Richmond," "And your lady?" "She is not come home." "And the children?" "They are at Richmond too." "And are there none of the family in this ruined house, are you sure there are none?" "Oh yes, yes, said Mr. G. "there is Lady Invermay, (she was then on a visit with us) but she never rises till midnight, she is not awake yet, and her woman is crying in her ante-chamber." "Let her be immediately awakened, and conveyed from the house," said Mr. B. "my carriage can take her to her sister, whom I left almost in convulsions." "And, oh! what will my poor lady

do?" said I. "I will wait for her," said Mr. B. "I will attend her myself, we will conceal the carriage if possible from these rascals; but let Lady Invermay leave this house directly, it is no longer her father's." I still sobbed out, "My lady, my lady;" but Mr. B. pushed me away, and called me fool.

In a few minutes, Lady Invermay came from her room, muffled in her pellice, she held her handkerchief to her face, and seemed very much overcome as Mr. B. led her to his carriage, which was still waiting; they whispered a good deal together in French, and she and her woman went off I suppose to Mrs. B——y. Mr. B. walked into the library, Mr. G. and I followed him, the ruffians looked surly at us, but did not offer to molest us; all the rest of the servants had gone, or were scattered in remote parts of the house. There was a dead stillness all around us, which none were disposed to break. At

last Mr. B. said, "If your lady on her arrival should be dragged from her carriage by these ruffians, between her fear and her anger, she will expire. For Heaven's sake Geale try to confound them with drink, and B. and I will watch for your lady's return." Mr. G. in his great goodness consented, though I am sure he would rather have been drinking with Satan than with one of the greasy wretches. Mr. B. paced quickly up and down room, and I stood sobbing in a corner.

At last we heard the roll of wheels to the door, we ran out together in a moment. The servant had let down the step, and my lady was preparing to alight. Mr. B. caught her in his arms, and prevented her. "Fly, Lady W." said he, in a low voice, "all is lost, all is discovered; you cannot enter here, you cannot stay here, go to Lady W. or come with me to Albina." My lady seemed thunder-struck. "Hide your

diamonds," said he leaping after her into the carriage. "Hide them, the hell-hounds are on the scent, you have not to the value of a shilling, that has not been seized." She took the diamonds from her head and neck. All this while I was making the footman quench his flambeau under the carriage, lest the ruffians should see the cypher and coronet.

"Whither shall I go? Where is Lord Westhampton?" "He is at Richmond." Then drive to Richmond. "Good Heaven, can you think of going to that place, at such an hour of night?" "If Lord Westhampton is there, it is the only place for me to go to; drive to Richmond. Is there not one of my people left in the house?" "Oh yes, I—I—I, Bennet, my lady, is here. Let me go with you. I will follow you to the end of the world." "You shall go with me, Bennet, come into the carriage, farewell Mr. Bellamy, go and console Albina—feel if the hand

which I hold out to you, perhaps for the last time, is damp or trembles?"

The carriage drove on, it was a dreary journey. My lady never spoke till she entered the Villa at Richmond. The servants, the house, every thing was in confusion, a wretched twinkling light burned in the hall. I snatched it up. "Get me a bed, Bennet," said my lady, "if there be a bed left in the house." I attended my lady to her usual apartment, when she was at Richmond; it was the little room off the library that was furnished with nankeen and black velvet. My lady, when I put her in bed, bid me give her forty drops of laudanum, and silence the time-keeper on the chimney-piece, and not disturb her till six o'clock the next evening.

Oh then there were such heaps of lawyers, and such odd-looking people, coming to Richmond, and at last, at the end of a fortnight, my lady had an interview with my lord; and I was at the

door with my ear and eye to the key-hole for two hours, and nothing could I hear but one French sentence, and one English one that my lady spoke in the pleasantest tone that could be, just as if she was laying out a pleasure-party with my lord, or any other gentleman. My lord said, cursing and swearing in a most heathenish, horrid manner, "What the devil in hell shall I do, if I go to that damned infernal country?" said my lord. "*Il faut cultiver le jardin, comme Candide,*" said my lady as pleasant as possible. "Damn the gardens," said my lord, for he swears dreadfully before my lady and the servants only. "I had rather go to hell, than go to Ireland." "You may do both, my lord," said my lady in a voice as sweet as an angel, so my lord did not seem to hear her, and says he, "And is it possible you will go with me to that cursed country?" "Yes sure," says my lady, "or to Botany Bay, or wherever else it may be necessary for

us to go, and I rather imagine a domestic arrangement will be the least troublesome one in the present state of your finances, as I am told your English mistress insists on a settlement for life, and your French mistress laughs at the proposal of accompanying you to a country of savages."

This was all I recollect of the conversation, but my lady was dreadfully ill when it was over, and still nothing would make her confess it, she had always such a charming high spirit, and she went the very day before her new beautiful barouche was sent to be sold, she went in it to London, and visited every one and left her poor dear adieus, which I am sure nobody in London was worth, at all their doors, just to vex them, and shew that nothing could subdue her: and so then we came to Ireland, and when my lady is in company, I think she is just the same as ever, but alone, Oh Miss Montolieu, she has dreadful hours, and I am sure there is

something heavier at her heart, than the loss of all the wealth and grandeur in the world."

Athanasia, who saw I was interested in these relations, but did not see how much, proceeded to tell me that her mother had once given her a sketch half as a monition, half as a caricature, in her own manner. "I wish," said she, "I could recollect the very words she employed, it was one evening that she had sent word she was unwell, and could not see company; we were sitting in the dressing-room, and I was reading one of Lewis's plays, *Adelgitha*, yes *Adelgitha*, to her, not the whole play, for she never could endure to hear the whole of any thing, but passages that struck me. She started from the sofa, and said, "Thank you, thank you, that is enough, or too much rather, now you shall have the fruits of a single error related by me in turn, and as your heroine dies, and mine

is unluckily for herself alive, and as there is much more instruction in life than in death, I expect you'll be vastly edified." She proceeded to relate to me passages of her own life, in her own manner.

END OF VOL. II.

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Ch. Jones

THE
WILD IRISH BOY.

Lady Montrevor's Story.

ALL Biography, I believe, should begin with a moral sentence. I am afraid the moral sentence will come in of itself at the conclusion of mine; besides to confess a truth, the first (of the kind) I ever told in my life, I know not a single moral maxim of which my life would be an exemplification, except by the rule of contraries; so, as the clown says in *Barbarossa*, "For want of *Prologue* I will tell my Story."

I cannot imagine what I was originally intended for; certainly not for a woman of fashion; for to the best of my recollec-

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tion, I had an heart once. One of the belles of Louis the fourteenth's court said, that she could not remember retaining her heart, or something else, after she was seven years old. I think I was about sixteen when I first peeped into the world, and saw—what d'ye think I saw?—a man. You need not stare, my dear, he was really a man; not the creature of his taylor and the women; not a man *by courtesy*, but in his *own right*. There was—what I had better not think of now. When the thought of that man floats over my mind, I seem to myself like Lucifer hovering on the outskirts of light, and healing his scars with the distant air of Heaven. I had better speak of him no more; if I do, these starts of passion will disfigure my story, as they have done my life. But what in passion is so horridly insupportable as love and remorse.

When I came out, as they say, at sixteen, the men said that I had twice the beauty, and the women that I had twice the bel air; and all the world allowed that I had ten times the vanity of any daughter of fashion in London. I agreed perfectly with them all, and did not know with which of my attributes I was most flattered. About this time half a dozen sickly brothers and cousins died, and I became the heiress of immense wealth, though the title was extinct, for want of a fool of a different sex. Then every body found out that I had ten times the beauty, &c. &c. &c. that I had before; and for fear of being inconsistent I increased my vanity in the same proportion. Yet with all this, I was not destitute of all good, though what it was, I can hardly now remember.

I believe it was rather a capacity of good, an improvable spot in the waste

lands of vanity, that no one thought it worth their while to look after. But, my dear, I might as justly describe my former self by my present self to you, as exhibit the beauties of a country through which an earthquake had passed. I find I must return to this man (whose name shall never pass my lips.)

When we were actually children, I had given him a promise in writing, in that strong form which passion never learned of the law, to marry him, and none but him. All this was done according to the best precedents of romance, on some moonlight night or morning, under a branch where two pigeons were very pert and amorous. I try to make you smile, my dear, but you will weep without an effort. This memorial he kept, he said, as a pledge of affection; I said, as a constraint on my feelings.

I had now a greater number of admirers than of any thing else, except

follies. My levee was absolutely a shop of coronets, stars, and ribbands; all the pretty things were marked with the same price—*my fortune*. But in the corner was a small parcel of pretensions, including only every virtue of the human heart, of which the price was *myself*. Yes, I owe it to my former self, to say I loved that man; but it was with a woman's love, a vain selfish love, that delighted in the homage it knew not how to appreciate or to deserve, and pleased itself with the prostration of an heart whose conquest it valued more than its virtues. Oh, I was a creature vain, volatile, presumptuous, I was unworthy of a noble heart's love!

It was my pride, my despicable pride, that first took the alarm; he was the only man that addressed me without a title. I blushed that he should hold an influence over me, that I thought I discovered a knowledge of in every one

who approached me (though his honourable love had kept it as secret as delicacy or vanity could wish); and foolishly I ascribed what was a natural deference for a superior character, to the restraints of this invidious talisman. Oh, I was a weak intoxicated wretch, unworthy of his generous love! Do not imagine, my dear, that all this exclamation is unintentional, I am fluttering in my narrative, like a fascinated bird, over the very jaws of ruin, and these short uneasy sallies suspend me for a moment longer.

But why need I be long in relating, what was but too soon in doing. Among the crowd, who "bowed and *talked* of love," your father was one. You know your father, my dear, his exterior I mean—they who can see the "mind in the visage," need not look further than *his*. Such as he was, with all the graces of a man of the fashion, and ten times the intellect of one, I fixed on him

as a proper instrument to execute all the devices of my pride, and jealousy, and vanity. I disclosed to him (indelicate and unprincipled) the secret of my engagement, and commissioned him to request that the paper which contained it might be restored to me. Wretch that I was ! The act I dared not be guilty of myself, I added tenfold the guilt of meanness and indelicacy to, by employing another to do it. It is the nature of women (and their curse) to compromise between evils, not from a consideration of their magnitude, but of their distance. I could bear the thought of his distress, his resentment, but I could not bear the single glance of his dark eye, had my request been personal. I can scarce analyse my motives now, but I believe them to have been not quite so bad as your eyes have pronounced them. I thought if I could get that paper, my knowledge of my own feelings would be

clearer, I should be a better judge whether I really loved, and if I did, my love would have more merit as well as sincerity.

I had a faint hope that in the vehemence of passion he would refuse it, and my vanity was gratified by the hope. At the bottom of my heart lay the selfish thought of a few years more of liberty without a bar, and pleasure without a monitor. Your father accepted the commission with an eagerness that might have undeceived me. The time of negotiation, which I passed in vicissitudes of hope and fear, of reproach and congratulation, was soon over. On the first mention that I had disclosed the secret of our engagement, to an envoy, he surrendered the paper without uttering a sentence. I passed a short interval burning with impatience, and shame, and resentment, and hope. I expected an explanation, I prepared an apology. I ac-

cused, I soothed, I vindicated, and I pleaded. No part of my life had before been so restless and miserable; yet such has been every part that has followed, that I wish it had lasted for ever. The interval was not long; the next morning I was informed he had quitted England for ever. Such was the intoxication of my vanity, I could not believe it.—Such was now the conviction of my passion, I dared not believe it. My heart misgave me. When in a few hours after I saw your father—saw him with that cruel smile which I yet see, and which you may see any day in Fuseli's picture of the serpent and Eve—I asked him with a faltering voice (for guilt always humbles) for the paper. He showed it to me at a safe distance, talked of his happiness, my condescension, &c. &c. I was stunned. He had not the mercy to let me doubt long. He let me read the paper. The form was strong and valid, but no name was ex-

pressed in the engagement, I was bound to whoever had possession of the paper. My signature was not plainer than my ruin. I know I should have resisted: I know I should have done any thing, but what I did—but shame and importunity and disgrace at the first opening of life terrified me. All this would not have done but for some remains of proud and womanish resentment, at the desertion of a man who left me without the honor of a vindication, or the tenderness of a farewell. I can dwell upon this terrible period no longer. There is, perhaps, no pain like retracing steps to evil, which might have been shunned when they were first entered on, and of which the repetition adds the novelty of recent pain to the gnawings of inveterate remorse. I must dismiss this—I was frightened and flattered and beset. In a few weeks, I was a bride—a peeress—a wretch!—Nor could all the glare and tumult of my other distinctions prevent my feeling

the last. I believe there is nothing more decisive of the character than a conviction of certain and permanent misery. It must make us either saints or devils. I had too much humility for the former—and so I became what I am.

I cannot describe to you the facility with which I adopted any reasoning that my passions suggested to me. I knew that I was young, and wealthy, and beautiful, and witty, and the world told me that to be so was to be happy. Now I felt I was miserable, but still I believed the world, and resolved to be as happy as the envy of society, and the abuse of my advantages could make me. Oh there is no telling the spirit of splenetic gaiety, and romantic wickedness with which one fastens on the world, determined to take all it can give, but feeling that peace it cannot give.—I did all that a bride and a peeress could do to dazzle every one and myself. Lady Westhampton's equipage,

and entertainments, and diamond hoop, and court-hoop were talked of, till praise or envy could say no more. All this did vastly well for three or four winters : at last I began to be weary of folly, then I tried *vice*. Do not start, my dear, "Can women then no way but *backward* fall?" Do not you think gambling vice—don't you think extravagance vice—don't you call neglect of my health, my peace, my reputation, my children, myself vice? Such is the morbid taste which we acquire from the habits of the world, that actually nothing but what has the *haut gout* of vicious extravagance will go down with us. I led an horrid life ; horrid even to myself!—my talents, my capacity for better things, my powers of being useful, or being happy, I piqued myself upon martyring to tasteless wickedness ; like Cleopatra dissolving the pearl in vinegar, they gave a kind of lavish and fantastic richness to the draught ;

but it was as unsavoury as ever. Besides my very pretensions to supreme fashion were often doubtful. I had sometimes too much feeling for a fashionable dasher—too much religion for a wit—too much conscience for a gambler. A thousand and a thousand times, like a truant boy, I measured the distance I had strayed, and wished myself back at any price. But there was no hand to guide me—not even an eye to encourage me. Had any one good creature but looked me steadily in the face with an expression of pity, I am sure it would have broke my heart or mended it. What do you think, my dear?—in my *despair* I attempted to extort something like happiness from your father : It was despair indeed !

Since I have mentioned your father, I will tell you a little of his vices in place of my own. Never man commenced life with such advantages, rank, wealth, talent, spirit. The picture had

but one shade; he was a mere voluptuary—nothing more. Pleasure was his system; but he was conscious of his great powers, and he imagined that he could enjoy all species of pleasure in rotation, that gross and refined pleasures would follow each other in amicable succession, without encroaching on their respective claims and capacities. Never was there a greater error. He that sacrifices the night to intemperance, will not, cannot in the morning have an eye for nature, or an head for study. The breath of heaven will not smell wooingly to the feverish wretch; the very lassitude which is the consequence of dissipation will compel us to seek for near and obvious pleasures to relieve its weariness, it will not leave us the activity that is necessary for remote, or the delicacy of organ that is requisite for refined enjoyment.

This I have experienced myself; so

has your father. He found that the gaieties of the night left him unfit for any thing but a repetition of them on the following night; so he slept away all the interval, *pour passer le temps*. With talents the most original and distinguished, he became a mere *gourmand*; because the pleasure of eating may be enjoyed more easily than any other.

He is now a Comus, who has lost his wand, and is driven from his palace of enchantment, but grasps the cup still.

A few years ago, a most extraordinary party rose in the fashionable world; they were a number of people who found it easier to laugh than to think, and therefore laughed at every thing, and never thought at all. Laugh, fun, frolic, were the watch-words of this society; and terrible, indeed, to sense and feeling, and modesty, it was, when the watch-words were given.

Really they resembled more a party in

masquerade, burlesquing rank by the most egregious mixture of buffoonery—more like the court in Tom Thumb—than characters in real life. The first time I ever was among them, I actually blushed (as the famous Magdalen picture was said to weep) *au bouts de doigts*. However, my motto was never to be outdone; and I accommodated myself to their style of conception and language, with such facility, that the whole society declared, Lady Westhampton was more novel, more poignant, more recherche than any professor of the style. I went home, with my head aching, and my heart too, at my proficiency. Such things as I have heard—such things as I have said; some of them I could not understand, some I would not understand, but the worst of all were those I did understand.

I will tell you a circumstance about those people, for it is in some measure

connected with my own history. Fun was their object; but the triumph was complete, when they could abase or corrupt what was really good, and worthy, and eminent. There was a young clergyman of some abilities, and some worth, but whose vanity certainly exceeded both, who had got one of the first lectureships in London. His vanity, however, was well directed; it stimulated him to professional excellence; he was an eloquent preacher, and as fond of his own homilies, as the archbishop in *Gil Blas* was of his.

The quizzical society fixed on him as an excellent subject. I will not say I was wicked or weak enough, but I was vain enough, (which is often worse than either, by its consequences) to be drawn into this plot, by the praise of my talents for conducting it. The very vice I was tempted to expose, I betrayed most egregiously myself in the attempt;

so much was I degraded, from want of proper objects to direct my ambition or my powers, that the laugh of fools had a power to bribe or to frighten me into any thing. A party of us went one evening, looking as grave as lurking mischief could, to hear him preach. He soon discovered us; and wretched indeed was our joy at finding that we had the power of making a man of talents falter and hesitate, from his fear or his desire of our suffrages. According to plan, we redoubled our attention, and threw such staring admiration into our faces, that the poor man became absolutely ridiculous: he dashed on, decking out his garbled declamation with ill-remembered scraps from other sermons, and torn limbs of metaphors, and similes and illustrations that "wondered how the devil they came there." His tones became absolute screams, and his gestures those of a maniac. Every sen-

tence was echoed by our party, with groans of contrition, something like those with which the Vicar of Wakefield's sermon in jail was received, and by which they contrived to stifle their laughter; but I topped my part, for, standing up, with a composure of face that cost me no little pain, I deliberately took notes of passages which more resembled cross-readings, or the sybilline leaves in a storm, than the sentences of a sermon. I am sure all the congregation were undeceived, but the poor man himself descended from the pulpit, with the air of Paul descending the Mars Hill. There we thought the farce ended; and, like Falstaff, we resolved it should be laughter for a month, that we had made a worthy man ridiculous, and disturbed a devout congregation. But what was my astonishment a few nights after, at seeing myself solicited by a billion of bows, to look to-

wards a little spruce figure in black, whom, when I had put up my glass, I hardly recollected to be the preacher our party had quizzed. I could scarce believe my eyes: it was at Lady D——'s, one of the most dashing houses in London. I actually took the trouble of inquiring how he could have got in, and learned, that since the night of our frolick, the man had been so intoxicated by the belief of our praise and admiration, and particularly of mine, that, with indefatigable pains he had insinuated himself into a company where he understood he would meet me, and enjoy the applauses of his eloquence from my own lips. For a moment I pitied the man; but the *party* had him in their talons, and they would not release him either for pity or shame. He was put down to play at the table with me, his partner was a companion (an humble one in principle as well as fortune) of

Lady D——'s; her cue was to lose, which she performed with an impatience that was capitally acted. But the looks, the gestures, the *toute* of the little parson, was so *outré*, his compliments so *bizarre*, and his *toute* so hyperbolical, that I could hardly command myself enough to win. At length, his repeated losses roused him from his trance of delight; he endeavoured to play with judgment, but judgment he did not possess. When the last game was concluded, like all the rest, he tremulously asked the rate we had been playing; his partner informed him, and obliged him at the same time with the exact account of his losses; it was probably about a fourth of his salary: the creature, with agony in his face, confessed he had *not so much about him*. I was about to request he would account with me; but my partner, with vulgar rapacity, required from him all the money he had, which still left a

terrible balance, and to be informed of his address. They pillaged him to his last shilling! Oh, I was sick of their horrid fun! I pitied the unfortunate man, and with more painful conviction I pitied myself.

It did not end there, the poor man was unwilling to leave his money without an effort: the employment he had engaged in from vanity, he pursued from avarice; in the vain and desperate fight of ignorance against skill and rapacity, he frequented the card-table night after night. His talents, his duties were neglected; from an exemplary pastor, he became a gambler, a pigeon; and, as a man of fashion, a caricature. His friends lamented, his parish complained, and the quizzing society laughed.

At last, Lady D—— ran one morning into my room, in high spirits. Our little parson (as she called him) was blown

completely. He had lost at her house, the night before, a large sum, for which he had offered a draft, that, on examination, had strong marks of forgery; marks that had been verified by his distraction in giving it. "He is blown completely," said she, actually laughing with joy, "we shall have another Dodd meditating in jail, with a gallows in perspective." I listened to her with horror, which I could not make her feel. But whatever were her notions of humanity or of justice, her notions of the value of 350*l.* were perfectly accurate, and she actually persisted in her intentions of exposing to prosecution the wretch she had betrayed, till shocked and terrified both at her and myself, I gave her the value of the draft myself, and bribed her to forego the frolic of a legal murder. The gratitude of this woman was equal to her humanity; as soon as she was in possession of the

money, she *whispered* every where that Lady Westhampton's reasons for quashing the business of the forged draft were more than the dictates of compassion. I confess this and other circumstances, such as will occur in the life of a woman of fashion, made me start, and would have made me think, had I dared to be alone for a moment. But what could I do? I had gone too far to recede. And what could I have gained by receding? I had no home, no husband, no happiness—nothing for a retiring heart to throw itself back on. Lord W——, whose only spring of life or motion was a search for pleasure, proposed, about this time, a tour through France and Italy. It was fashionable for the English nobility to make tours at that time. Do not imagine we expected any pleasure from each other's society; but he was still vain of his wife's wit and beauty; and I was still

afraid of the eclat of an external separation; my peace was gone for ever, but my name was unsullied. As I am going to tell you horrid things that happened, when I did go, I will first tell you something that happened before I went. I wrote an earnest and forcible letter to the clergyman, I mentioned to you, in which I neither spared his errors nor my own. I absolutely insisted on his quitting London, and London habits; and that obedience might not be *implicit*, I procured him a valuable living, at a distance from Portman-square and all its works, where I am told to this day he continues an example, that human virtue may recover from wounds apparently mortal, merely by *change of air*. The night after this business was finished, I think I recollect having slept without laudanum, which I had been in the habit of using some time.

We went to Italy, with a splendid suite. You look as if you wanted to know something about the Italians; positively I will tell you nothing, because my intention is not to deprave you but to instruct. The conviction, that an *involuntary* insight into their character suggested to me, *was*, that if there existed on earth national religion, morals, or good sense, they existed only in England. Intrigue—intrigue is the entire occupation of the Italians, body and soul. By the constitution, men are excluded from politics, and women from literature, by their education, in most instances; so they make love, as children do mischief; not from passion, but idleness. The inside of an Italian is exactly like the inside of an Italian church—a mixture of tawdry devotion, and childish ceremony, and antic gesture, where gallantry and religion chase each other over

the scene, and cupids and cherubs, and Venus and Madonas, dance along in great harmony and confusion.

I actually was frightened at discovering where I was, for the reputation of gallantry is not enough. In London I could hide my coward fears of decency and shame, under an affected defiance of both, that succeeded vastly well. I talked so like a woman of fashion, and a libertine, that every one was satisfied I had said enough, if not too much, to prove my claims; but the Italians go deeper:—Oh, they are an horrid people! Yet, such was my infatuation, such was my inability to be any thing but the creature of flattery and fashion, that I went to the very brink of the precipice; and, when I grew sick with horror and giddiness, instead of retreating from the danger, I shut my eyes on it; and all this to please or to pain a set of beings whose praise or envy made them

alike contemptible to me. There was at Rome a very mysterious and useful character, the Countess B——; she kept one of the most splendid palaces in Rome, no one knew how; but if you saw the crouds there, you would imagine that all Rome was pledged to discover it.

Her entertainments were somewhat singular: she always introduced some person in a fantastic habit, some juggler, or wizard, or wandering Jew; every thing was immediately abandoned, to witness his exhibitions; they were generally performed in a dark or shaded room, and consisted of some extraordinary deceptions of light, and disguises of persons, that were amazingly clever, they said. In short, his experiments made all the men very happy, and the ladies very wise. This woman had persecuted me with politeness since my arrival in Rome. I was warned of the

danger of her conversazione; so I resolved to go, to prove how inferior Roman wit and courage were to mine. Her apartments were crowded by all the nobility of Rome: at the usual hour the conjurer appeared, as an Armenian pedlar; we all crowded into a small room, and I began to wish, with Falstaff, that it were bed-time, and all well. Some beautiful transparencies were displayed, and while we were all gazing at them, he announced an experiment, for which he said it was necessary the room should be darkened. I fixed my eyes on the door—the lights were extinguished in a moment, I am sure by some chemical preparation, it was so sudden.

But the scene that followed—screaming with horror, and cursing my own folly and madness, I extricated myself from I know not whom, and struggled through the darkness, till I felt the hangings of a window. I did not know but

it was an attic one, but death was preferable to what I dreaded, and I flung myself from it; it was on a ground floor, and I found myself in a garden, through which I fled like a fawn, without knowing where flight would lead me. I thought I heard steps; I rushed into a bower through the trellis of which I actually forced myself, and got into the garden of an adjacent palace. "Madre di Dio!" said a voice which I knew to be Lady Delphina Orberry's, who was then married to an Italian Duca, "Who is that?"—I had never seen her twice before, yet I actually embraced her, and implored her to protect me with the cowardice of real innocence. She led me to the palace, making a wonderful mystery of my concealment, and assuring me that if the Countess B—— was acquainted with my flying from, or exposing the orgies of her house, I could not reckon on my personal safety

in any part of Italy, for her taste in poisons was as ingenious as her taste in gallantry. I was terrified, you may guess how much, from the sequel of the story. The duchess was determined not to let my gratitude waste itself in acknowledgments. There was a tall, thin, pale, sentimental boy at Rome, who, between religion and love, was actually mad: every thing in the Italian character is blended with superstition. This spiritual Pygmalion had fallen desperately in love with a statue of S. Veronica, which he said made such returns to his passion as no statue ever made before—it was, indeed, a beautiful figure. Had he stuck to the marble, all would have been vastly well, and no ill consequences could have accrued to the saint's reputation or his own; but unluckily, on my arrival in Rome, inventing or believing some resemblance between us, he took it into his good Catholic head, that

I was the saint in person, come from heaven or hell, to reward his pious gallantry. Actually, while the host was passing through the streets of Rome, and all the devout Italians were on their knees, he fell on his before my coach, which stopped as usual for the procession, and addressed me in a prayer that was certainly *pleine d'onction*. He was an interesting boy, with dark, melancholy eyes, and a shade of such mild religious dejection over his face, that his *etourderies* would rather make you weep than smile. With this unhappy boy the duchess had actually fallen in love. She loved him, she assured me, ten thousand times more than she did her Santa Padrone, and I believed her.

At first I tried to laugh at her romantic folly; but I soon found that the passions of an Italian were not to be laughed at.

At last, when I had listened to her

vehement professions till I was quite weary, and a little frightened, she made me a proposal, on my compliance with which, she said, she rested the proof of gratitude for my preservation. Horrid wretch! How fear had humbled me to listen to her. I was to array myself in the costume of Veronica, and appear in a chapel belonging to a convent, where his confessor, whom she had bribed, was to conduct *him*. Here I was to play my saintly part, and wave him, by inviting gestures, to a dark recess, where I was to be supposed to follow him, but where the duchess was to be concealed in my place. When I had recovered my breath, of which rage and shame had deprived me, I answered her with as much energy of affronted honor and feeling, as if the folly which had put me in her power, had not rendered them impotent to me. She interrupted me with violence, and kissing a cross

that hung on her neck, swore, with the virulence of a Catholic, and an Italian by marriage, that before night she would inform the countess of my flight from her conversazione, and before the next, I would probably be a corse; that I owed my life to her believing that I went away from her party, as *others went*, and that she would not preserve my secret for nothing.

Oh, dread for ever, Athanasia, the consequences of that daring levity, that hazards the appearance of evil, from the consciousness of its being no more than the appearance, a consciousness impossible to communicate to others, or to trust to in ourselves. The dread of false shame will lead any one to merit every imputation of the true. With an heart as chaste as any saint in Rome, St. Veronica not exempted, I was compelled to be the pander of a vice I loathed, and the imp of a sorceress whom I abhorred.

Yes, compelled actually in terror of my life, for what evil at that moment could have been so terrible to me as death? There are parts of my narrative, my dear, that must not be told, or even imagined; yet, it must have turned the brain of a good Protestant to have seen me glide from among the draperies of the altar, my light vestment floating like a cloud around me, and my head wreathed with phosphoric radii, which, in my fears of poetical or divine justice, I thought a thousand times would be changed into pure element for my sake; in short, the whole business was conducted with true Popish art, and Pagan wickedness. As soon as I could I descended, and implored the confessor to take me away from a place which I thought was falling over my head. On our passage, which was unaccountably long, my ecclesiastic became vastly more *spirituel* than I

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could wish ; but what could he think of me? Was not he justified in thinking the worst of me?

Feel for my situation, or rather do *not* feel for it, for I do deserve it. By her own levity, an Englishwoman, of the first rank, and of spotless character, was placed in the solitary power of a ruffian, who, possessing the confidence of guilt, thought nothing else could be withheld from him. I was almost mad with horror!—With the strength of phrenzy, I broke from him, and ran along passages of which I knew not whether they led to the dungeons of the inquisition or not, provided I escaped. At last I found myself in a dark, narrow, vaulted recess ; one dim lamp burned in it, which shewed me faintly a crucifix, and a dark figure kneeling before it. Blind with terror and flight, I grasped it, and adjured it to save me from “ horrid shame and

ruin." The figure turned round—the light of the lamp fell on its face!—
How shall I go on!"——

Athanasia, who felt all her mother was about to say, sunk from her chair almost at her feet, and grasped her hand, with the other Lady Montrevor hid her face for a moment.

"It was he himself," said she, in a broken voice—"it was he whose name I never shall mention. How or why he was there, I knew not; but I hung on him as if he had dropt from heaven, for my preservation. He did not know me at first—I do not wonder at it: when he *did*, I wished to sink into the earth.

He had risen, in surprize—and I had fallen from my hold; unsupported, I fell to the ground—I spread my hands before my face—I wished him blind—I wished the lamp extinguished—I wished myself on the wings of a whirlwind.—
An heart-striking pause followed. He

raised me—he dragged me to the lamp—he traversed my features, with a gaze of horror and incredulity. He released me, and again I fell, for I was not able to stand: it was the hour and the power of conviction—it came over my heart with a force proportioned to its long, unnatural suspension. It is a dreadful task to learn, in one moment, what you are, when years have been expended in the effort to hide from yourself that very thing. In that one moment I felt myself a lost creature, whom folly had sunk as low as vice—whom wretchedness had made as desperate as depravity.

Other convictions were with me—our early hours of innocent love, our hopes of better things than either of us had seen or done; for I had heard that he had become a man of unhappy, wild habits—our remembrance of each other when——”

Lady Montrevor’s voice utterly failed

her, and she bent upon her daughter's neck, and wept. "He stood at a distance from me, and I could hear him muttering to himself, at intervals—'can it be?' Yes, said I, it is—it is, your—I could not stand, but I tried to follow him on my knees—my pride was gone, I humbled myself like a child, and wept, as I do now. Hear me, hear me—I am miserable, very miserable, but I am not guilty: my heart is broke almost, but not changed. I know you—I remember you well. I humbled myself to him—I poured out my heart to him—I told him all; how despair of happiness had driven me to desperate ways; how I had become from folly and perverted ambition, the involuntary, the shuddering partaker of vices I loathed. I told him why I was there.

Before my wretched tale was done, he knelt and wept beside me; but oh, his burning tears! they were not such as

fell on me, when first, in the energy of young passion, they rushed into his eyes, while he looked on me. How thin and wan he was ! I felt, from his being in that place, that his character had changed as well as his person. I knew it from his language : he tried to talk like a saint, but still he wept like a man. I felt the bursts of passion that shook him, as if they would rend him in pieces. I would have shortened this scene ; but who will blame me for listening as long as I could, to the voice I was to hear for the last time ? He spoke much of himself and of me. He said I had made him a wild, hopeless being ; that he was not mad, but at times he felt his mind was changed ; that, in the wreck of his passions, he had fallen into unhappy courses, but he would not reproach me : he was restored to the bosom of the true church. But when he talked of me—when he adjured me, like him, to aban-

don the world and its vanities, when he spoke of our yet meeting where neither tears nor passion would stain the meeting—a flood of agony drowned his voice—and I—Athanasia, let go my hand—you are in tears yourself, leave me for some time; and remember for your comfort,” said she, trying to smile through her anguish, “that all this was twenty years ago—that he is dead since, and I am *buried*.”

It was some days before Lady M—— renewed her story, for after any exertion she usually passed a long interval in those heavy dozes, which the habitual use of laudanum will produce; and from which she only awoke to call for it. At length Athanasia was summoned one evening; for till the evening Lady M—— was never perfectly awake. “I do not know, my dear,” said she to Athanasia, as she was dressing, “what effect my narrative may have on you; but with

me 'it murders sleep.' So I have sent for you, to try whether my waking or sleeping dreams are most disagreeable; with me in this deep loneliness, the review of these things is like the recollection of a dream.

I got home without any more persecution; and for some time I thought I should be freed from persecution for ever; for I was seized with a violent nervous fever. The tragedy of the "Fruits of a single Error," was followed by the farce of the "Doctor and Apothecary." They sent for a vast number of nurses and physicians, to whom I took care *not* to tell my complaint; so they found employment in taking their fees, which amused them, and guessing what it was, which amused me; but whatever were the consequences of this masquerade to me, they were worse to our unfortunate victim, who no sooner discovered the deception, than he stabbed himself to the heart, in the pre-

sence of the duchess. The business was however hushed up, as none were acquainted with its reality, except the duchess, the priest, and the saint. After this, you may believe, I found the air of Rome did not agree with me. I returned to England, bringing back with me, after an absence of four years, a person polished with all the *art* of beauty, a mind stored with all the graces, *ou piquant, ou seduissante, ou naïve*—and an heart corroded by despair. Oh, it was weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable. No creature could believe, that with the life I led, and the efforts I made, and the laborious confusion I contrived to keep up about me, that I was actually dying of a broken heart—the slowest as well as the most certain of deaths. Oh, the depth of settled gloom to which the most mercurial spirit will sink, when unsupported by conscience and reflexion. I was the miserable *Carlini* of laughing hundreds and thousands. You have

read of Carlini, who kept all Paris laughing, and half-dying with dejection himself, was advised by a physician, who did not know his person, to go see Carlini, as a cure for his hypochondria. I was the miserable Carlini of laughing hundreds and thousands.—But why did I persist in this tragical mirth?—What could I do, my dear?—Besides, to confess the truth, tho', like Pandora's coffer, every good thing appeared to have escaped from my touch, vanity still remained behind to console me. I had no husband, no children to live to—but I had vanity. I had no friends, no worthy applause to exert myself for; but I had vanity. I had not even the fresh and nimble spirit of youth—the emulation, or the curiosity, or the *jeunesse de l'esprit*, that renders folly sweet and graceful; but I had vanity, vanity, vanity! After all, I do not recollect that I became so desperate and hopeless, till I heard of his

death; then I felt as if all restraint, or cause for restraint was removed; for I often have seen his eye fixed on me, when half the world was between us. Whatever follies I was guilty of, the world gave me abundant credit for, and for a thousand vices beside, that I never was, never could be guilty of. Never was woman abused as I have been. Why did not I resist, d'ye say? Why, my dear, I laughed at the malice, and, I did not dislike the eclat; but when my own children joined the cry, then my resolution or my patience failed for a moment; but my pride upheld me—I laughed on—hid my wounded spirit under an assumption of mirth, that made all its wounds ache again; and submitted rather to the imputation of vice, than the meanness of pleading for reputation to my own children. Such children!—I gave them every advantage, brought them out, almost from the nursery: I have

put on their rouge and pearl-powder with my own hands. I was as much above the jealousy of mothers as I was above any ground of jealousy; for now I may avow a superiority that can offend them no more. All was in vain—they were mere fashionables—they had no hearts—that I could pardon; but they had no justice, no candour, no principle—that I never can. I will relate to you, Athanasia, the circumstances that preceded their *matches*, and you shall pronounce if ever a fashionable mother was more contented to abdicate in favour of her successors than I have been.

You know your eldest sister, Lady Castle Wycomb, is married to the first political character, perhaps, in Europe. I have to give you his domestic character:—He was, I admit, my professed admirer for many years before he married Delphina—it was not then supposed he ever would marry. No people could un-

derstand each other better, we had both read Rochefoucault, and the world. He professed to admire me, because I was a fashionable beauty, to whom some political influence was ascribed. I professed to admit his admiration; because—because he was the premier. But I knew in my soul that man delighted not him, nor woman either. He had neither feeling nor admiration for any one but himself; and he knew also that *pour l'affaire d'amour*, S. Francis's wife of snow would have been as accessible as Lady Westhampton with all her coquetry; so the world and we agreed perfectly well about the affair. We stopped on the brink, the world said we had crossed the Rubicon—the world was delighted with the scandal, and we were delighted with the reputation of it. I think Louis the XIV. confessed that no man could be a great man to his valet de chambre—Lord Castle Wy—

has verified it, though he understands and manages the resources and revenues of the wealthiest nation on earth. He is such an idiot in domestic affairs, such a dupe to peculating servants, and an whole army of placemen out of place, and men of business, who have no business on earth, whom like the sorcerers in tales, he is obliged to find employment for, lest they should tear him in pieces, that actually nothing but his *privileges* have preserved him from a jail for life. The character is not an uncommon one, but I never saw so striking an example of it.

Latterly, however, one reptile like Aaron's rod, has swallowed up all the other reptiles. A confident subtle fellow, whom nobody knew, who had latterly become his charge d'affaires, or rather charge sur ses affaires, had driven away every one else from him, and been admitted to his table, his interest; nay, to

a share in his political confidence and consequence. So much had his fear or his gratitude to this person prevailed, that he actually went the length of a quarrel with the first families, because they did not treat him with respect. At last, this creature took a whim to sit in parliament—Could you guess the reason? He had received some slight at the premier's table, from a baronet of an ancient family, whose ancestors had been the representatives of a certain shire, since the first invention of shires by king Alfred, for ought I know. Nothing could satisfy his spleen but ousting the old representative, and bearding all his ancestry to their grim faces, in the very Town-hall, where their pictures had hung since the conquest.

But the difficulty was how to ^{at} deal with the proud and attached electors, who had always voted in favor of one family. Lord Westhampton happened to

have extensive interest there, which hitherto had been always employed for the baronet. But now Lord Castle-Wycomb in behalf of his candidate, supplicated, and promised, and bribed; and Lord West—always accessible on the score of interest, consented to withdraw his voters; and in order to identify the interest of the family, Lord C. W. proposed his friend Mr. Mason, in form, as a candidate for my eldest daughter's hand.

I confess I was amazed at his presumption; so, I believe, was Lord Westhampton! but a detail of the immense wealth and numerous appointments that the creature had engrossed, together with the additional promise of a brilliant diplomatic appointment for our eldest son, then Lord Montrevor, prevailed with my money-loving Lord, who inclined to these profitable arrangements—"with sweet, reluctant, amorous delay."

Nothing now remained but to win the Lady; for my part, I had laughed through the whole transaction, and I now laughed more than ever, at the idea of the reception of the proposal from Delphina, high-born, and proud, and passionate as she was. To my astonishment, she yielded in a moment; but in a manner sufficiently in character; for she intimated to Mr. Mason, that she would dispense with his presence, till it was *actually necessary*, or rather metaphorically unnecessary, as they were then not to be twain, but one flesh. You will wonder if I did not cease to laugh now, when I saw my daughter to marry, without passion, or even respect, or any thing, but a rage for expence, without bounds, and levity without controul; for the wretch whom she could thus despise, she must also not hesitate to abuse. Why, my dear, I could do nothing; I dared not advise or appeal to

her; my own conduct had deprived me of any demand on her confidence, or any authority over her conduct.—Mine to her had been merely that careless indulgence by which I tried to conceal or palliate my, perhaps, criminal indifference to her, and to every thing else. We were sisters in dress, in habits, in conversation, in mutual independence, in every thing but confidence and affection. But had I been even disposed to play *La bonne mere* with Delphina, I would have been alone on the stage.—She is a woman of a proud and hard heart, and her principles are as bad, as she had a right to conclude mine to be from the exterior she saw.

A dreadful confession has escaped me; but from it, you must observe, that I *dared* not advise my own child.

All things, therefore, were going on in the usual train of fashionable marriages; that is, the lawyers were contriv-

ing how to settle a vast deal of money on the lady; and the lady was contriving how to spend ten times the sum before it was in her possession. One day as Delphina and I were passing through Bond Street, in my baroche, we were stopped by a croud collecting round something we could not see. At length out of the midst of the mob rushed a man, very much frightened, and after him a woman, big and ugly enough to frighten any man. The man was Mr. Mason, the woman was—his wedded wife, she said, who had heard of his doings in the wilds of Cumberland; where he had confined her, she said, on twenty pounds a year, with his large family of small children, while he revelled with nobles in London, like a vile perjured wretch as he was, she said. In short, it is impossible to tell all she said and sung; for it was actual recitative, with a very full accompaniment from half a

dozen squalid brats, that hung around her, pretty much in the costume and tones of Scylla's brood, that you have read of: while he, poor man! surveyed his family with the same loving looks of recognition, with which Milton describes Satan ogling Death, when first introduced to him by Sin, as his child.—Here, you may suppose, I was disposed to laugh again; but the truth is, I was frightened almost as much as poor Mason; the woman looked able to eat us, baroque and all; and I had no wish to tempt the fate of Tom Thumb with a red cow. We drove home as fast as possible.—Lord W. had heard all; so lawyers met, and referees were appointed; prosecution and pistols were talked of; and good Mrs. Mason, with her family, had taken undisputed possession of her husband's splendid house, in South-Audley Street.

I confess, this affair (of which the truth soon appeared to be exactly what

good Mrs. Mason and the children had represented so strongly in Bond Street) did not surprize me much. I knew him to be a mean low-born creature, who had crept into affluence, by practising on the obvious weaknesses of a great mind; a rat who had gnawed out his burrough in the hold of a great vessel, and then compassed the world in safety. That such a man should be married in the early part of his life was not improbable, that he should be married to a being like himself, was very probable; and that he should desert and banish her, and be a villain in the hour of his affluence, was the most likely thing in the world.

In the mean time, the election was just beginning—Lord Westhampton was to withdraw all his interest from Mason, and was posting down to take the field in person against him. Delphina was in distress between rage and shame: like a mask I have seen between half-tragic

and half-comic; and I was determined to send out six hundred tickets, for a masked ball; contradict the whole story, and treble my quantity of rouge, that “no thought infirm might alter my cheek,” while I was lying to the whole world;—when one morning, as I was coming from the Queen’s drawing-room, where I thought it necessary to be just at that time, I was surprised to see Lord Castle-Wycomb’s chariot at my door, we alit at the same moment—he followed me, unbidden, up stairs. I entered one of the drawing-rooms half-angry, half-amazed; for all the family included him in the insult they had lately received. We were alone.—He addressed me in the most earnest manner—implored me to save him from confusion and disappointment indescribable—swore that he would make any terms and concession to Lord Westhampton, and if his interest in —shire was not withdrawn from his

friend—"That splenetic little devil," said he, "insists upon that borough—nothing will else satisfy him, but to gall that foolish old baronet. He is undone if Lord W's influence is withdrawn from him; and I am undone if he is disappointed. He has threatened me this morning in the most insolent manner. I cannot conceive or resist the influence he has over me! I cannot do without him! He knows it, and insults me. Dear Lady W. I throw myself on your mercy, devise, suggest something to pacify Lord W. and your daughter."

I actually was touched by his perplexity and distress—to see the man who ruled the councils of Europe, crouching to the whims of an insolent dependant. I tried to rouse him by irony—he did not feel it. "As to Lord W." said he, "I know he would not long continue implacable, could the lady be appeased." "Aye, my Lord—there's the rub."—

“ And can you imagine nothing to satisfy—to sooth her.”—“ Really,” said I, still ludicrously, “ I know of nothing, unless your Lordship proposes for her yourself.” He struck his forehead—“ The luckiest expedient.”—I could not believe him serious, I requested him to consult his feelings.—“ Oh !” said he impatiently, “ It is a matter of perfect indifference to me.” “ How infinitely flattering !” said I. “ You mistake me, *ma belle Comtesse*,” said he, resuming the courtier. I was very willing to mistake him ; for my eyes were dazzled by the auspicious brilliancy of Delphina’s prospect. I accepted his apology, promised to submit his proposal to my daughter ; and to prevent Lord Westhampton’s contradicting the instructions, he had given his tenantry in behalf of Mr. Mason :—“ Then every thing is arranged,” said he, “ how happy I am in having a fair ally, a lovely minister !”

I assured him that my expedition was prompted by my wish to get rid of my hoop; for I still doubted the seriousness of the whole business, I still mingled some badinage in my condolence—"Every thing then is arranged," said he, but pausing, and trying to look tender—" *Mais mon cœur,*"—I laughed, and shuddered—"Oh," said I, still speaking in French, for fear of the servants—"An affair of the heart with you was always a sinecure affair." He was hurrying away, when struck by his last words, and foreseeing consequences more than I ever foresaw before—I called him back.

"My Lord," said I, "though you are a statesman, and I am a fashionable belle, the present moment requires candour. You have been my professed admirer—you are about to be my daughter's husband; the world has said more of our connection than it ought; and, perhaps, of our separation it will say less

than it ought; but, *you* know me; and you know that to vanity I have made large sacrifices, to vice never the smallest. Bereft, perhaps, through my own folly, of my natural protectors and natural confidence, I must appeal to you. Let neither vanity nor jealousy betray you to insult your wife, by slandering me and yourself. Remember from henceforth, I am your mother; let me, like Ninon, convert an admirer into a son, though not with the same consequences." He promised with the air of a man who is thinking of other things than a woman's feelings; and I was pleased with even this security, for being not exposed to horrid infamy.

In the mean time much was to be done—I dispatched an express to Lord W——, who was dining with an election party at Richmond, from which he intended to set forward that night. I sent a footman with my own chariot for Delphina,

who was at the exhibition. I gave him a note, which I desired should be given her between the leaves of a catalogue. Every thing succeeded as I could wish. Delphina hurried home, delighted with her new prospects—Lord W—, *maugre* Ham, pie and Burgundy, set off that night for ——shire, to recal his instructions to his agent, and arrived time enough to prevent a single man of his from polling for the independent member—while I hurried to my dressing-room, not to throw off my hoop, but to draw up a bond of marriage between Lord Castle-Wycomb and Delphina, under a penalty of 40,000*l.* on the failure, which I presented to him in my hoop, and fairly locked the door till he had signed it.

Now was the time for a coup de main. The story of good Mrs. Mason was unluckily as public as her appeal *au peuple* was. I went that night to the

opera, and laughed so *well* at the report of my daughter being married to Mr. Mason, that the people began actually to distrust their senses, and wondered with each other at so improbable a story, which the good souls had been propagating themselves, with more veracity than they imagined. To those to whom I was compelled, like Falstaff, to give a reason, I whispered, confidentially, that it was an election manœuvre. I had no more idea annexed to the phrase than they had, yet they all went away, flattered by the disclosure, to improve it in their different proportions of faith and knowledge. Thus *I* did all—the idea was mine—the execution was mine—the success was mine; and the first conjugal speech of Lady Castle-Wycomb to her Lord, was, that she was acquainted with the whole story of the locking-up business; and insisted that I never should be invited into her house, except

when all the world was there, and I might be a *figure* in her rooms.

This Lord Castle-Wy—repeated to me, —for the sake, I suppose of repeating his answer, which was spirited enough, for the ghost of a departed lover in the purgatory of Wedlock to make, that he was shocked at the proposal, and never would consent to it. Of Lady C. W. however, it is but justice to mention, that she delivered her lord from his degrading subjection to Mason, who is never admitted within his doors. As to the care of his property, she has taken all that upon herself, and I am told is very successful in removing any reason for care upon the subject—so much for my Gonerill.

Now for our second daughter:—Lady Invermay is, if possible, still lovelier and more worthless than her sister:—her extreme coldness, her haughty insensibility, her utter want of any thing that could touch or enchain

the feelings, repelled every one that approached her. They gazed on the statue, left it on its pedestal, and walked away. The summer after Lady C. W. was married, I passed at Sir W. D.'s: it was the most ridiculous thing in nature—a party of cognoscenti—no creature was to be admitted that had not been a member of the Arcadi—nothing was to be spoken at meals but Italian—no sound but of Italian melody was to be breathed at the concerts; the house itself was constructed after the model of the villa at Arcolono, where, for the honor of antiquity, they found a glazed window. All this *could* be borne, but there was no bearing our little, lying, virtuoso host. He was enough to raise or lay the spirits of Mendez Pinto, or Sir John Mandeville. No one had seen any thing that had not seen an eruption of Vesuvius, and such eruptions as he had witnessed, no one had ever seen.

As he sat at his table vomiting out mountains of fire, and seas of lava, he reminded me of the dwarfs of old romance, feasting the knights at their table with the lies of enchantment. But in the midst of all our taste and stupidity, when we were just beginning to wish for a little English and common sense, there dashed in upon us a wild young Highland nobleman, a nephew of Sir W.'s, who violated Virtu, and charmed the heart by every word and look and motion : it was his delight to confound and torment his uncle, to dismount the endless cavalry of statues that blocked up his gardens, and throw himself at full length upon the flimsy Etruscan seats, and hang his hunting cap on the spires of the chrystal candelabra. He did not take the smallest notice of Lady Invermay, as she was soon to be, but every thing else was driven away by an *evenement tres grand*. A black marble

figure arrived from Puzzoli, purchased by Sir W.'s agent there, about which there were as many disputes as about Dr. Scriblerus's shield, or Mambrino's helmet, or any other antique, useless, and ugly, and inestimable. Sir W. insisted that it was the Syrian Venus, and had all the foreign academies about his ears. I assured him it must be the witch Canidia, or one of the hideous mourners at an ancient funeral; and Lord Invermay taking the hint, swore it was the picture of the old woman who led the funeral cry at the interment of his uncle, the Laird of Kilcarron, and died of drinking spirits, in honor of the solemnity. This almost drove Sir W. mad: to strike us dumb, he determined to have a public Apotheosis of his deified statue:—he set apart a small cabinet for her temple, filled it with heads and legs and wings of eastern deities; erected an altar, so perfectly constructed on ancient

principles, that it was impossible for the unhappy divinity to sit, stand, or kneel on it; and persuaded the ladies to officiate round the figure, in the attitudes of sacrifice, *dans le costume l'orient*: we were all to present flowers or gems or shells; or, if we had nothing worse, our own figures. All this was sufficiently *nouvelle* and *recherche*; but with true childish gaudiness of taste, Sir W. determined to invest his statue in a spangled robe and cestus, and begged of me to adjust this doleful masquerading dress; after which the figure looked so like the little swarthy Lady of Loretto, that I assured Sir W. that he would be fined for keeping an unlicensed chapel. On the evening before the *fete*, I had just led a large party into the cabinet, to adjust the flowers from which the drapery of the nich was to be suspended; when, stretched on a sofa, quite unconscious of any divinity but Mor

pheus, we saw Lord Invermay fast asleep. He had been out with an hunting party all day ; came home fatigued, and, as usual, took his repose on the first sopha he met. The glow of health was on his cheeks, which were temptingly shaded by his ruddy hair. He looked charmingly for a votarist in the Temple of Venus, consulting her by dreams. As he lay, half sunk among the roses with which the sopha was strewn, a peer, who *had* read Pope's Homer, observed he only wanted a Juno, to represent Jupiter-asleep on Mount Ida, which poured forth flowers to refresh his slumbers. Fond of the praise of my graceful attitudes, and *graceful confidence*, I placed myself at the sopha, suspended one arm over his face, and bowed myself in an attitude which extorted "charming!—*grace-contour!*" from every one that knew how to speak vertu and French. Lord B. drawing the cestus from the

poor little black devil of a goddess, declared, that I was more worthy of it; and besides it was the costume of the character I represented, who had borrowed it for the occasion. As he was folding it around me, I perceived, by the undulation of Lord Invermay's lip, that he was awake, and preparing to catch me in his arms. I started from the sofa, just time enough to prevent him, and ran laughing out of the cabinet, leaving the cestus behind me; this he caught on my flight; and, in a very pretty chivalric flourish, kissed it as a pledge of discovery, and swore by it, that he would follow and recognize by it, the fugitive owner, a part of whose dress he believed it to be. All this was told, and laughed at as a jest, by every one but me. I caught an idea from it, which I developed that very evening.

Your sister had been on a visit during the adventure, of which I took care not

to inform her, but proposed that we should exhibit the attitudes which we were to assume in the sacrifice the next day ; and commenced by displaying one that tore me a veil worth seventy guineas. Several followed—some laughing, and some so serious, that every one laughed but themselves. Sir W. was in raptures—he started—gesticulated—screamed with applause. “ Raise the arm—plant the foot—(a little more *en profile*)—now you are quite a fury—delightful. Now extend this coffee-pot in your right hand, and you are converted into a ministering Hebe.”

In the midst of his cognoscenti agonies, I glided away with your sister to the cabinet; threw the drapery and cestus of the statue over her ; and, without mentioning my motive, entreated her to float in among them, in one of the attitudes of Parisot, in the famous *pas de* shawl, which was quite the rage at that time:

she obeyed, for she had a reliance on my taste. I followed her, when she entered in the trophies which Lord Invermay had sworn to recognize. Every eye was directed to him; he felt the appeal—it was not difficult to address some badinage to a beautiful woman. He sprang forward, and addressed her in a flow of such sudden and animated gallantry, that she actually blushed and looked interesting: I believe he felt her to be so at that moment; and whether it was this impulse, or the difficulty of retreating, after so ardent an approach, or a restraint something like obligation, from the presence of numbers; and the remembrance of the language into which he had been surprized before them, or the consideration that he must marry some time, and might as well marry then as any other, or all these causes combined; but from that evening he pursued her with the most assiduous attention,

entreated leave to follow us to Lord C. W.'s, where we passed the remainder of the summer, and in autumn your sister became Lady Invermay, from the success of a finesse, which, light and fantastic as it is, was as successful as the heavy manœuvres of a whole winter campaign in London.

There were two tolerable things said on the occasion: the peer, who had read Homer, observed, that we need no longer be at a loss for the denomination of the statue, as the event had proved her to be the Juno Pronuba. The other, alluding to Lady I.'s *entre* into the saloon, that eventful evening, observed, that her dancing master or mistress must have been a consummate artist, as they had taught her to *step* into a marquise and 20,000*l.* a year *a pied*.

Now to tell you of the good things that were done as well as said, in consequence of this event. I have heard of some people

whose sensibility was so exquisite, that they could not endure the idea of an obligation, but Lady Invermay carried this to a most fastidious excess ; for she appeared, by her conduct since her marriage, to consider the obligation it had conferred, as the most mortal injury.

I will not tell you—I cannot bear to think of—the many trivial, goading provocations, by which a weak mind may sting a generous one almost to distraction. I cannot bear to tell the paltry, female stories of rival parties, and rival equipages ; and woundings of silence, and the eye, that are invisible and mortal. Oh, let me die by any poison but the serpent-tooth of a thankless child !—let me be damned with any thing but the faint praise of civil hatred.

I will say no more of myself ; my feelings are perpetually breaking in on my narrative. Of your sister Bellamy I need not speak ; she has behaved to me with

uniform decency, and I am content that she "shall dwell in decencies for ever."

Thus was I living, if this could be called life. My talents, my feelings, my time, my happiness, lost! and lost without account; and, what was worse, without enjoyment. Every day, like Lady Townly's last 500*l.*, was gone after the other; every hour was passed in misery; yet of no day could I tell why it had been thus passed. No abuse was ever so wilful, no wretchedness ever so criminal. True I knew no one happier than myself, and many that looked up to me as the happiest of human beings; but it is a wretched mind that can be fed by the envy of others. It was no mitigation to my contempt of myself, that I was able to condemn all the rest of the world.

At this time the event occurred, of which you deserve to have some account; an event which would have driven half the fashionable women in the world to

madness: it had even a more extraordinary effect on me, it drove me to reflection.

It is a long and horrid story; I will try to abridge it for your benefit, or my own. It appeared that your father, who succeeded to the title and estates of his cousin the late Earl of Westhampton, who died suddenly, was apprized that his cousin had been married to an obscure and low-born woman, who was unacquainted with the real rank of her husband, who bore him a son, and who died unconscious that she had brought an heir to the house of Westhampton; the Earl himself died before he had acknowledged his son, and the few witnesses of whom your father could obtain any information were silenced by what has the power of making all mankind silent or eloquent as it pleases. The heir himself was sent to Scotland, to Ireland, to the Indies, East and West, to every country from whose

bourn no traveller returns. He survived every hardship, he struggled through every difficulty. He was possessed of some documents, and some intimations remembered from childhood; he was conscious of something not congenial to the mean and laborious life he was condemned to, and he contrived to make a friend and confidant wherever he could make an acquaintance. In the mean time, the number of confidants that your father made, for other reasons, was increasing every year; the care of the absentee became every moment more difficult and more expensive; those who were employed, communicated it to others whom they employed; the *douceurs* became more exorbitant, and the secret less safe: in the four last years the sums laid out in the care of this unfortunate young man's safety, by the extortion of agents, amounted to upwards of 30,000*l.*, as appeared before a committee of the House

of Lords appointed to examine the business. In this miserable strife of fraud, oppression, and fruitless waste of principle and money—in these horrors of secret iniquity—in this abjectness of menial collusion, had your father lived since the period of our marriage. A little after your sister Bellamy's marriage, the whole matter was discovered; the unfortunate exile found means to reach England, where a suspicion of his existence and pretensions had long been diffused. He applied to eminent lawyers, prepared a petition to the King, lodged in the verge of the Court, and took every means that promised success, or what was equal to it—publicity. Such was your father's infatuation, that till a committee had actually been appointed to examine the affair, he could not be persuaded of his danger: the ruin then was sudden and dreadful! I was totally ignorant of our circumstances till then—they were in the

most desperate state ! It was aggravated by a report that Lord W—— had lost his peerage, and consequently his privileges; and on the night we escaped from London, eight executions were in the house in Curzon Street, and his person was threatened with an arrest. When we had leisure to look stedfastly on our ruin, the Irish estates, the title of Montrevor, and about 4000*l.* a year, were all that remained of an establishment once adequate to the support of princes. We were fallen ! fallen ! fallen ! Yet I was determined to fall like myself. I had been the Cleopatra of the revels for many loose and worthless years, I was now to be the Cleopatra whose departure was to throw dignity upon a clouded life. Lord W—— was so perfectly convinced of my having been utterly innocent even of the knowledge of the persecution practised on him, that he offered me out of his recovered property the jointure stipu-

lated in my marriage settlement, with the title of Dowager of Westhampton. I rejected it. I resolved to banish myself to a country I dreaded, with an husband I despised, to extort admiration from a world that had refused me justice. No matter; I was born for admiration, and admiration I was determined to have: my mind was perverted, my peace was lost, but my pride was unbent and unbounded. I will not repeat the interview I had with your father. The glimmerings of human feeling flashed out on both sides: he was melted at my magnanimity, at his finding me to be what he could hardly believe to exist, and I was melted at his discovering it so late. I believe I shed tears, or something like it, but I will tell no more now, though I think I have been treated harshly. I am not begging for mercy (said she, bursting into tears), but I think I have been treated harshly. But, Oh! (said she,

rising hastily, and striking her forehead violently) when I think of my time, my powers, my heart—of the things which I might have done—of the life I ought to have lived ; when I think of that first and best of men murdered, actually murdered by me—a murder on my soul—it is a wonder that I waste existence between the dozings of laudanum and despair !” —Such was the story of the victim of fashion.

At the end of this melancholy narrative, to conceal my feelings, I snatched up the English papers which the servants had just brought in ; I was glad of the pretext to call Athanasia’s attention from me. They were all in a blaze with Lord and Lady Montrevor’s return, and the marriage of Lord and Lady Weshampton, and the joy and triumph of so many noble families, and of all the fashionable world. Paragraph-Nevill himself, in the “ Winter in London,” never exhibited

such a *chef d'œuvre* in splendor and interest; the whole pride, pomp, and circumstance of the progress from Ireland, their traversing roads with six horses, and four out-riders, and a chariot with four for her Ladyship's female attendants, her Ladyship's travelling costume of scarlet and gold (exactly similar to that which the Irish papers announced as the Duchess of B—df—rd's, when her Lord arrived in Ireland to assume the vice-regal honors), no other guest being admitted while they staid two days in Dublin at the splendid hotel in Sackville Street, which was once the mansion of the Marquis of Sligo; their declining the urgent request of His Exc—ll—ncy and Her Grace the Duchess of R—chm—d to pass one day at the Phoenix Lodge before they quitted Ireland; and, four days after, their triumphal entry into London, where unfortunately a slight cold (the consequence, we hope, of travelling merely) at present

prevents her Ladyship from receiving the congratulations of the fashionable world, on an event which has restored to it unusual splendor and felicity. After this, the account of the nuptials of Lord and Lady Westhampton was like a train to the nucleus of this blazing meteor: her Ladyship must have felt some disappointment at the bridal jewels, and veil, and blushes, being compressed into a paragraph of about ten lines, while her mother's triumph blazed in every column of the newspaper, and regular bulletins announced the importance of her health to the fashionable world.

While we were perusing these pompous paragraphs, the servant who had been employed to shut up his lordship's closet, as we inhabited but a few rooms of the spacious mansion, came in with a paper which had been found there, and which he begged pardon for supposing of consequence. I looked at it to discover if it was. Atha-

nasia and I were not a little amused at finding it to be a *copy of the paragraphs*, with a thousand interlineations and emendations, partly in his lordship's hand, partly in his valet's (with whom it appeared he had been consulting, for the last week, to frame this pompous intelligence), which described every stage of their progress before they set out, and their *reception* in London, while they were in another country. Such was the weak and ostentatious mind of the husband of Lady M.; of the man who had destroyed her happiness, and perverted her mind, and upon the ruins of the first of female characters erected his toy-shop of glittering vanities, and insisted that she must appear happy at the exchange.

With a mind burning with the passion of distinction, and determined to forget joy and anguish alike in the struggles of public life, I set out for England, and carried with me a spirit as ardent, and

hardly better versed in the science of life than that with which I had commenced my winter in London. After a journey performed with the ease with which people of opulence usually travel in England and Ireland, we arrived in London on the 4th of December, 180—; and immediately entered into a splendid suite of apartments in a new street at the fashionable extremity of the town, which had been prepared for us by Lord M. The arrangement made at Montrevor House was, that we were to have passed our time in London at a house which Lord M. had taken in Berkeley Square; on his arrival, however, he found, or fancied the furniture so defective, that he accepted Lord Castle-Wycomb's proposal to remove to his house in the same square, till "every thing had been arranged in Hope's style in the new mansion." A note was therefore dispatched to us, intimating the new arrangement

which was only to continue a few weeks, as the first artists in London were employing their utmost expedition in filling the new house with all the wonders of a fairy palace. It was late when we arrived. Athanasia was languid and weary: the chimney-piece was crowded with invitations for "to-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow" from every branch of the family in expectation of our arrival, and as far as the branches which were lit as we entered the room, threw their light, it only fell on titles. There was an invitation to a family dinner in *Berkeley Square* for the very day of our arrival: Athanasia, throwing herself on the sopha, requested me to go: "No, my love, I will not leave you to-night; besides it is too late, and they will think my intrusion at this hour a blunder of supper for dinner; my first essay shall not be so characteristic." "Oh not at all, you will be quite in time; they are amaz-

ingly late at Lord Castle-Wycomb's, you will make me happy by going." "I should rather if I could, make you happy by staying, let me stay (and I threw myself on the sofa beside her,) and do something to amuse you." "No," said she, with one of her smiles of languor and sweetness, "you shall go and do something to amuse me; you shall bring a note to *Madame*, who is of course at Berkeley Square, and tell her I am dying of fatigue, or dying to see her, whichever she pleases to believe, and she can return in the carriage, and sit with me till you come home, and don't hurry yourself to return early."

I had no wish, no intention to go out, but I dreaded to appear suspicious of her conduct or her companions; I promised to go, and while I was dressing, she gave me a note for *Madame*; it was a *twisted* one. I was struck by this expedient of secrecy, and thought of it, till I found myself in Lord Castle-Wy-

comb's spacious hall; I gave the note to one of the servants, and hastened to the dinner-room, where I understood the company had just assembled. To me, accustomed even to the splendor of Montrevor House, the effect of the present scene was actually dazzling. Lord Castle Wycomb lived more splendidly than all the rest of the ministry, distinguished as they were for convivial splendor. Lady M. had appeared in full dress rarely and capriciously when in Ireland, and assumed a fantastic mixture in her costume to mislead the *starkers*; but here the full splendor of a winter in London, in the costume both of dress and entertainment, burst on my eyes that ached with their glare. Lord Castle-Wycomb, in respect or in curiosity, rose at my entrance, and displayed in my reception a condescending dignity that he was somewhat surprised to find I had expected, and was accustomed to; a general circulation of

bows, and a muttered repetition of names, and an immediate application of glasses followed round a company of about twenty persons. I was at length seated between two ladies, whom by their inquiries for Mrs. Bethel, not by the *manner* of them, I discovered to be two of her sisters. I conceived it necessary to make some apology for the lateness of my appearance, of which I felt the awkwardness had probably increased the general scrutiny. I was answered by Lord Castle-W. slightly touching his glass, and slightly bowing to me, as an intimation that he wished to take wine with me. I was accustomed to the fashionable abbreviations in manner, and bowed as slightly in return. "We have quite exploded apologies," said the dashing Lady of the mansion, who was one of my neighbours, "all that is now *passé*; we have introduced in its place a facility that does every thing it pleases without giving of

fence, and lets every thing be done without taking any." I congratulated the system on having so eloquent a definer, and ventured, as I spoke, to raise my eyes where more lovely and luxuriant than ever, Lady Montrevor was seated opposite me in all the glare of exaggerated spirits, and all the pride of gratified ambition; amid splendor and dissipation, quite at home, and too much at home, she shone out the queen of pomp and pleasure, with whose wit no one could contend, and whose beauty no one could emulate. She was conversing with a gentleman whom she immediately named to me particularly as Mr. Bellamy, and then resumed her conversation; yet from that moment her manner became interrupted—I thought she remembered Ireland—I thought she remembered Mr. Corbett. The dinner, interrupted only by occasional introductions to my new relatives, who appeared to think "the

honor of taking wine with me," sufficient notice of the connexion, passed away like any other dinner, at which she was present, in gazing at her. My eyes ached with her lustre, and my heart with her levity. When the ladies retired, she passed my chair; I waited for a word, for a look; I had at least the latter, but it was one which perhaps I had been better without.

The conversation after dinner was local and desultory—politics were not even alluded to. I have observed, in my intercourse with distinguished political men, that, except when engaged in actual details of business, they speak rarely and guardedly on the subject. The company seem to *act* parts in conversation, which were assumed for the occasion. Mr. Bellamy, Lord Invermay, and some other young men, who were fashionable loungers, calculated the chances of an important expedition, of

which intelligence was expected every day. Lord M. with his usual *tirade* of feeling, begged them not to mention the subject, as the anxiety he felt on his son, Colonel Montolieu's account, who was engaged in it, rendered it insupportably distressing. Lord Castle-Wycomb, and one or two political characters, talked with rapture of Catalani, and with *gravity* of a sale at Tattersall's. When we ascended to the drawing-rooms, I was dazzled with a new scene of splendour: about one hundred persons, of both sexes, were dispersed through a suit of rooms, whose walls presented views such as the windows of the palace of an Egyptian Bey, opening on the surrounding country, might give, if that view could include all the wonders of Upper and Lower Egypt. The Nile drew his mighty train among the colossal ruins of the greatest empire of the world. The paintings were

divided into compartments, by obelisks, inscribed with hieroglyphicks; the lights were dispersed by bronze sphinxes, the corners of the seats, and the cornices of the draperies, were moulded into sphinxes—sphinxes supported the pediments of the chimney-pieces; and sphinxes formed the handles of the splendid vases that embellished it. Kotzebue was never more assailed with representations of this unclassical figure, in the French theatre, where he complains they formed or destroyed the entire decorations of the fabric. I was soon sated with gazing at every object but one; she was playing, and winning with a *nonchalance* that appeared to provoke her antagonists more than her success. She rose from the table—“What have you been doing, Lady M.” said one of the party—“Winning, my lord, winning; Lady M. always wins,” said the dowager, who was fanning her-

self vehemently. "Losing, my lord, losing—my time, I mean, for I should have been at the opera half an hour ago. I have not been there yet, and I proposed going with Mrs. Bellamy's party. I have hardly had time to win a few guineas as you see. Mr. Bethel, will you come? We shall have room for you in Mrs. B.'s box; and as it is not to be uncommonly brilliant, you will lose less spectacle by not going to the pit."

As we passed Lady Castle-Wycomb's chair, she intimated her wish that I should return to a *petit souper*. In the anti-chamber, a large party were assembled for the opera. Lady M. manœuvred with her usual skill, and we went together in her chariot. A long silence followed. "At length we are in London," said Lady M. "and I am repeating, '*son regime*,' as has been said or sung. Now to avoid thinking of myself, let us talk of you. I have spoken

a vast deal of you to Lord Castle-Wycomb; amid all the recent changes he has kept his place, and his consequence. I really believe him to have some respect for my opinion. He does not look on me as a *weak woman*. I have made some impression on him, by my representation of your talents. The remainder must depend upon yourself; but never commit yourself to Lord Castle-Wycomb: make use of him, but let him never make use of you: he is a mere statesman: the inscription on Lewis the Fifteenth's statue, might be placed on his, if ever they build a statue to him, or hang him in effigy, which is much more probable, and equally useful, in point of notoriety—'*sans foi, sans loi, et sans entrailles.*' Exhibit whatever you possess of talent, but forbear to exhibit your information, if you have any. Make yourself important to him by a display of powers which he will find it his in-

terest to produce; but when once produced, or introduced, let their exercise and direction be determined by your own principles: let him flatter himself that he is bearing a 'wren upon an eagle's wing,' till he finds that, 'you have soared above him.' The present ministry want talents, I do not mean in themselves, but in others: they require men of ardent minds, and ambitious activity, such as yours was, when you imagined the reformation of Lady Montrevor *possible*." She sighed, as she spoke; and of all she had said, only the impression of the sigh remained.

I was astonished, and almost entranced at my entrance into the most superb theatre, probably in Europe. By the judicious regulation relative to the dress of the company, at least the male part, we are saved the disgust of seeing the splendor of the house contrasted and polluted by the plebeian appearance that is admitted at

the theatres, where men of rank lounge into the boxes, and in the lobbies, in the slovenly costume of the livery stable. I listened to the first singer of her own, or perhaps any other age, with as much delightful attention as the perpetual prattlement of the party allowed me to enjoy. It was ludicrous to observe the caprices of fashion in the group. Mrs. Bellamy, who, her mother informed me, possessed hereditary taste and performance in music, affected a total insensibility of the most exquisite pleasures of sound; and, during the performance, drew a lace handkerchief, that was appended to the ringlet on the crown of the head, over her ears and neck, as the morning papers had announced "the fashionable chin-stay assumed by our elegantes, in consequence of the prevailing sore throats." While the rest of the party, who were totally indifferent to music, were in raptures,

and perpetually interrupted their pleasure by applause, at the commencement of a *da capo*, or the midst of a cadence. "These are the people," whispered Lady M.—"whose breath forms the fashionable atmosphere in which I live, poisonous as it is. All this is physically true, for you know *Azote* forms a principal part of the air we breathe, and what is worse, it is morally true, as I can prove by my present perverted existence. Take warning by me, Mr. Bethel—beware of false and dangerous notoriety—beware of such men as those around us, as Lord Roschamp, and Sir J. Orberry; and beware of such women as his wife."—"Is Sir John married?"—"Yes, he is married to a sister of Lord Castle-Wycomb's; she was formerly married to an Italian Duca; she was in Italy, when I was there; she is a finished pupil of the Italian school. Her husband and she live in the most comfortable

manner possible ; he never visits her, except to extort money from her, a kind of tax upon gallantry, which the liberality or the fear of her *friends* supplies her with ; and in the mean time takes care that no actual ill usage allows her a pretext for a divorce, as that must conclude the traffic of profit and disgrace.” —“ Is such depravity possible ? ” —“ Look at her, and you’ll not believe it, or forget it all :—she is just coming into the opposite box.” I looked and beheld a female apparently not twenty, attired with the simplicity of a vestal, hardly a tinge of rouge on her cheek ; her dark-brown ringlets disclosing her white, serene forehead, and arranged in a tuft on her fine formed head, whose bend made it resemble an antique bust of Attention. An air of shrinking, and timid, and playful innocence, pervading her whole frame, seemed to contend with the polished ease and elegance of fashion,

which she could assume in a moment. There was no glare, no flutter in her manner: she appeared anxious to be left to the music, and to herself; and the naïve and childish attitudes by which she diversified her deep attention, and musical enthusiasm, exactly touched on the barriers between nature and grace. It was a relief to look on this object, when the mental and bodily eye alike were dazzled with the *too* brilliant and beautiful Lady Montrevor.

“I am quite wretched I came here to-night,” said Lady M. “I beg pardon, Mr. Bethel, but I must request you to lend me your ears or your eyes, for the remainder of the night, if they have done waiting on Lady Delphina Orberry. I cannot think of being seen here by her and her *party* to-night, or any night but Saturday: this is not *the night for me*—my forces are not collected yet---Lord and Lady Westhamp-

ton are not returned from burying their bridal blushes at their villa in Kent: when they return, which will be to-morrow, I believe, we will charge at the head of all the family forces, and plant our standard in the very centre of the pit, by all the laws of fashionable warfare, where its memory will glitter long after I have ceased to glitter. At present, have the goodness to put me into my carriage, and then do with yourself whatever you or Lady Delphina Orberry may please, for the remainder of the night."

Determined to convince her of the disengaged state of my feelings, I informed her of my intention to sup at Lady Castle-Wycomb's. "*N'import,*" said she: "when I lost the power of example, I lost the power of advice." I was about to answer this painful language of perverted feeling, when we were obstructed by two male figures who stood apparently without any purpose,

directly in our way. They were Lord Roschamp and Sir John. They immediately assailed us with execrations of the opera---it was the most infernal lounge in the world---nothing but the ballet tolerable. No, damme, the famously knowing night here, Bethel, was the bishop's night: *we* were the performers, and they the spectators---damme, but we gave them a most famous exhibition: the instruments never gave so pleasant a sound to my ears as when they all went crashing together, mixed with the lights, and the squalls of the performers."---"Mr. B. I must get into the carriage, before Lord R. thrice 'slays the *slain*.'"---"But was not your Ladyship most infernally annoyed by this unmeaning kind of horrid screaming, that they have here---not like English at all, damme."---"Yes, and whenever I am infernally annoyed, I always try to make my escape, *you see*,

as soon as possible." "Bethel, my famous fellow, I shall certainly call on you to-morrow: I mean to show you something of a more knowing lounge than the opera---I'll put you up to Bond Street, and a lounge in the betting rooms at New Market---and all that, damme. I'll certainly be with you to-morrow, Bethel, damme. There is nothing I like so much as putting up a fresh one to a knowing touch. Heh---Orberry, I think we'll have Bethel one of us."

They both laughed, and we passed on. At that moment I was almost impelled to forbid their visit: something between false politeness and false shame prevented me. Among the croud of loungers, a lady, who appeared to be retiring, passed us. "Who is that---she's a damned knowing figure," said Lord R. who still lounged near us. "That, upon my soul, I believe---upon my soul I do not know---Yes, by heavens it is my wife---

yes, that's my wife, Lady Delphina Orberry." A slight bow of recognition passed between the fashionable husband and wife. "If she is approaching, I will not retreat," said Lady M.—"To conceal the want of forces by courage, is one of the first manœuvres of *generalship*." We paused, and the haughty bend, and striking attitude of Lady Montrevor, were again contrasted with the simple and diffident grace of Lady D. Orberry, that seemed to "blush at its own praise."

"Drive to Berkley Square—I am so little *one of us* yet, that I have a mind to play *le bon mari*, and go home to Mrs. Bethel."—"Since I have removed you from Lady Delphina's sphere, I am not afraid of the attractions of any other; but have the goodness to accompany me as far as Berkley Square."

"How can you speak thus to me—you who know——who know"——

" Yes, I know you to be an enthusiast; one who feels too much, and who conceals nothing he feels : I saw your eyes-- I saw your soul to-night. You must acquire a little more *addressè*---an intercourse with the most worthless must teach it to you; people, by appearing to hide their feelings, get the credit of having something to hide. In life you may meet few *characters*, but you will find every one wears a mask *selon le costume*. Apropos of both masks and characters, Lady Delphina Orberry is a Messalina in the habit of a vestal; she is a dangerous, a dreadful woman; she is the only enemy I ever had, and her enmity is not half so dangerous as her *love*. Oh, my Lord, beware of that, it is a monster *that doth mock the meat it feeds on*."

We were in Berkley Square, as she spoke, where splendor and luxury, and exquisite wines, and music, protracted the supper till a late hour in the morning. On my return, Athanasia was

asleep. Madame Hahl's novel of Delphine was under her pillow, and her eyelids, even in sleep, were stained with the tears which a false sensibility had excited by its perusal.

We were lingering over a late breakfast the next morning, and Athanasia was inquiring about her sisters, and whether I thought any of them as beautiful as their mother; and I was endeavouring to answer her evasively, when a curricie, in which, no way distinguishable from each other, Lord Roschamp and his groom were seated, with two out-riders, stopt at the door, and the next moment his lordship was in the drawing-room, *sans apologie*. "Mrs. Bethel, I'm delighted to see you in London---upon my soul you look enchantingly---want a little of Lady M's rouge though: never saw her look so famously lovely as last night; she's quite the rage again---quite the knowing thing to know

her now. All London is at Lady Castle-Wycomb's door, since that nervous cold she had, or said she had, on her arrival: upon my soul, I believe she has a patent for beauty---she ought to have had her daughters names included. Come, Bethel, we're just in time, half past three is the hour for Bond Street. Damme, you'll be most amazingly astonished; you, who were never up to any thing of the kind before." I told him Mrs. Bethel was an invalid, and I did not wish to leave her: I had at least no wish to accompany him. "Not leave your wife---damme, you'll both be in every caricature shop in London. How do you like that curricule? It's amazingly knowing built. Come, I see you are devilish shy about your dress; but no matter for that: you can be up to a curricule, if you are not up to a pavement-lounge. I'll whirl you to all my people of business, and you'll be a devilish knowing figure to-morrow: only tie a

silk handkerchief about your neck, and just let the neck of your shirt appear above it, and muffle yourself up in a great coat; for, damme, if the building of that coat is not quite scandalous." I still resisted, though such a Cicero as Lord R. was the very thing for a fashionable lounge; but Athanasia telling me that her people of business would occupy her whole morning, and that she would probably take whatever carriage might call on her to La Tour's, who never went out to any one, I hesitated, and Lord R. dragged me away, after informing Mrs. Bethel, that if she did the knowing thing, she would never employ any but male artists about her person: male milliners, male dress-makers, *toute le rage*, as your fashionable mother and all your fashionable sisters can tell you."

In a few minutes I was whirled, according to promise, to all the people of business, who were employed by fashiona-

bles: the complete equipment of a Bond Street lounge was bespoke; Lord R. was particularly attentive to the construction of the hat, twenty of which he examined, and at last selected a "knowing slouch;" but hesitated a great while, as the importance of the cause demanded, between the surtout's being furnished with velvet cuffs and facings, or with a deep border of fur round the perpendicular collar and the wrists; the artist declaring, that the latter was much more expensive and elegant, seemed to determine him, and the fur was bespoke. "Now," said Lord R. "we must bespeak a full dress, as it is impossible to be '*un honnête homme*,' without sometimes going to those infernal parties which our women of fashion give." I told him I had brought all I probably should want with me. "Heh—damme, that's a good one—brought your wardrobe from Dublin: sell it to

an old clothes-man, then, my fine fellow. Do you imagine that such a costume as your's last night would *do* for a fashionable party?—your waistcoat three inches too long, when a waistcoat is hardly more than three inches in all:—the buttons at the knees of your breeches so straight and lateral, instead of being almost across the knee; and the strings tied at the side, instead of nearly in the front; and the coat with that short waist and high collar, instead of buttoning below your waistcoat, and fitting on your shoulders like a woman's shawl." I asked was it possible he had time to reconnoitre my appearance so distinctly during the short interval of our meeting the preceding night? "*Time!*—Oh, damme, time enough, I have nothing else to do with my time. And along with your wardrobe, I suppose you have brought the family equipage from the Castle, and mean to petrify us in Hyde

Park, with those famous old cattle you had in Ireland." I pleaded guilty.—
 "Good heavens, could you endure to let your wife drive in such a caravan to her sister's doors, or clash with their splendid carriages in Bond Street! By heavens, they are a famously knowing set, quite up to every thing—no women live in a more dashing style; and now that they are re-inforced by their mother, who is an host of fashion and beauty in herself, you will look damned insignificant among them, unless you have every thing in the most knowing style. I'll shew you to the first coach-maker's in London—has all the birthday business; and, Oh!—damme, I see you could not have done without me at all.

This was too like a scene which I had once before acted with Deloraine on another stage, and which had ended so tragically. However, I considered that I was now in London, that to have a

carriage was necessary, and to have a fashionable one equally so; at all events I determined Athanasia should not have cause to repine at the splendor of her sisters. We were now in Bond Street, which is as inferior to Dame Street, its corresponding street in Dublin, in regularity and splendor and spaciousness, as it is superior to it, or any other I could imagine, in the concourse of business and passengers, and the tumult and magnificence of the equipage. Twice we passed Lady Castle Wycomb's carriage, which appeared to have no other purpose there than to display its fashionable mistress, whose rouge was visible through all the fog of a wintry evening in London in Bond Street. Another figure sat back in the carriage, applying a glass to the objects as they passed, in an attitude of fashionable vacancy. Lord R. who was manœuvring with his utmost skill, through the blockade of vehicles of

every description, now exclaiming that he saw Orberry on the pavement, that it was choaked up with the loungers, and just the time, and just the party to charge among them—"I make it a principle never to take the lounge in Bond Street, with less or more than three"—jumped from the curriele; I followed his example, and placed between him and Sir John Orberry, found myself enclosed in a crowd, to which all crowds I had ever encountered in Dublin, were trifling.

By a lady crossing from her carriage to a shop, before which several carriages were entangled by their wheels, we were at length stopped on the edge of a pavement close to a coronetted equipage, which the driver was vainly attempting to conduct into the mid current that was in motion. The carriage was particularly low, I looked up, and found my head in contact with Lady Castle Wycomb's." She

laughed—"Almost cast away in the storm of Bond Street," said she. "He has got an experienced pilot at least," said Lady M. who was in the carriage. Ashamed of this trifling, I would have passed on; but Lord R. assuring me it was quite the knowing thing to lounge beside a fashionable equipage, detained me by the arm, while he continued a whispering conversation with her ladyship, his arm resting on the window. "I have just been with Mrs. Bethel," said Lady C.—"She looks vastly interesting. She has promised to dine at Berkley Square, I hope we shall have the pleasure of introducing you to your new relations, Lord and Lady Westhampton; they have just arrived in London; if your pilot steers well, I hope we shall see you about seven." I bowed, for I was anxious to do something beside lounging in Bond Street.

It was near five o'clock before I extricated myself from my companions. I

entered the drawing room and found Athanasia immersed in ~~it~~ ^{the} finery, which the whole morning had been spent in examining and purchasing: "Will you be angry with me for all this extravagance?" said Athanasia, who was adjusting an enormous lace veil before the glass. "No, my love, it reconciles me to my own. I have been importuned to the purchase of a thousand superfluities myself." "How good, how indulgent you are," said she, approaching with a sudden impulse of softness, "I ought to love you—How I ought to love you!" "Love me, my darling, for any reason but that you *ought* to love me." "Is love voluntary? You should not teach me so." "Why not?" "Because you appear to me to talk quite out of character.—All the husbands I *read* of, are stern, rigid beings, with nothing but lessons of duty in their mouths, and all the horrors of it in their faces and lives;

but you—you have a sad and gentle carelessness about you, as if you did not care for me, and did not care to shew it; and still you are so kind and indulgent; if I had not married you, I must have loved you!" "The practice of love is always sweeter than its metaphysics," said I, kissing her. For her blandishments had obtained an influence over me, which a married man often feels to be superior to that obtained by merit or affection. Her spirits revived, and she amused me during our progress to Berkley Square, with the singular character of Lord Westhampton; and Lady Castle-Wycomb's singular skill in *managing* him in her negotiations for Miss Montolieu. Lord W. was, in the language of the fashionable world, quite a savage and a bore; that is, he was utterly averse from its manners and habits; ludicrously jealous of his station and responsibility, as a peer; and as ignorant of the part of

life to which his recent rank had introduced him, as a being who had been only intimate with its utter reverse, and passed the prime of life amid hardship and vulgarity.—Rough as he was, Lady C. however, and her sister, saw his “Visage in his wealth;” all the Montrevor family had made a point of visiting and noticing him, to exculpate themselves from a consciousness, or a share in the persecution he had undergone from their father. The man was captivated and flattered by the attention of polished and beautiful women; but he recoiled from their dissipation, and loudly reproached their immodesty. Every one, therefore, who could sacrifice their feelings to the hopes of a coronet, and 25,000*l.* a year, tried to accommodate themselves to the unaccommodating taste of the Earl. In this struggle, however, Miss Montolieu instructed and encouraged by her sister, was fairly

triumphant. She encountered a large party of fashionables, where he was present, with her robe up to her throat, and her sleeves down to her elbows. She *preferred* going to hear Incledon and Mountain, the very week that all the fashionables in London were dying with rapture, at the Opera where Catalani had made her first appearance; and she fed and caressed an enormous Newfoundland dog, which any other female would have fled from; and which his Lordship always introduced into company, together with a story of its having saved his life.—When some years ago, “being a little in liquor, d’ye see, and walking the decks, with my weather eye almost closed up, I soused overboard, and should have gone to the bottom as plump as lead, but for Neptune here.”

The contest was soon decided between art and perseverance, and simplicity and security. Lord Westhamp-

ton proposed for Miss M—; but qualified his proposal by a very extraordinary impulse of humanity; “for damme,” said he, “but I think I owe the poor girl something, after depriving her of her rank and fortune, and leaving her dependant, as one may say, upon her sister and your Lordship.” Lady C. however, was to be indemnified for the damage of her furniture, and the injuries done to her fashionable reputation, by the intrusion of his Lordship and Neptune into her drawing-rooms, by Lady W’s. opening a faro-bank, on her marriage, in Soho Square, in the profits of which, her managing ladyship expected largely to participate: “For,” said she to Athanasia, “Lord Castle-Wycomb, who is the oddest creature in the world, and will never give up some *particular points*, has declared, that considering his public station, &c. &c. &c. he never can consent to my keeping a

faro-table in Berkley Square; so to avoid his diplomatic tirade, I have got Lady W. in consideration of the assistance I afforded her establishment, to *make* her Lord consent to her keeping a faro-bank; and we are so much together, it's just the same thing. Now you must not tell my mother of all this; for though she is quite the rage now with her wit and her beauty; yet she never was up to any thing of that kind. She never was completely one of us—there was always something fastidious and shirking about her, when things came to a point; she appeared to have joined us more from vanity than inclination.”

At seven o'clock, we were again greeted by the same splendid circle in Berkley Square, and the task of bowing round it was hardly concluded, when Lord and Lady Westhampton were announced. Lord W's appearance was exactly adapted to his character; his exterior was that of a

Commodore Trunnion ; but unlike the commodore, he hated his professional element, and never spoke of his former hardships, but with sincere and honest aversion. Lady W. paid her compliments with uneasy expedition, and appeared anxious that her Lord and Neptune should be seated as soon as possible. Lord and Lady M. had not yet quitted their dressing-rooms, and as they had not yet seen Lord and Lady W. it was necessary to renew the ceremony of introduction on their entrance. Lady M. entered first, and received her new relative with a dignity that proved a complete command of her ludicrous feelings. Lord M. approached, and Lord W. who expected that the man who had persecuted and injured him, would feel some degree of diffidence at his sight, was so disconcerted and astonished at the courtly facility with which the unblushing peer approached him,

that hastily withdrawing his hand, and exclaiming, "Oh! damme, this is too bad!" he seated himself again in visible displeasure. Lady M. who wished to spare her daughter's feelings, or to disguise her own laughter, lamented her cold, which had prevented the pleasure she had purposed herself, &c. &c. Lord W. who had transferred his attention from Lord M. to her Ladyship, muttered audibly---"A glorious vessel, by heavens! but mounts French colours like all the rest."

Dinner was announced, and Lord W. after recommending his dog to the care of his servant, determined to distinguish himself by some signal act of politesse; and rushing into the circle, seized hold of Lady M's. hand, and led her down with a perfect unconsciousness of the violation of etiquette, while Lord C. shrugging his shoulders in the back ground, presented his hand to the young Countess; and ar-

rived in the dinner-room, only time enough to see the incorrigible Lord W. seated almost at the head of the table, beside his beautiful mother-in-law, and enquiring what she chose, before any one but himself was seated. On seeing a number of ladies approach, however, he quitted his station, and placing himself beside me at the lower end of the table, did as much honor to the French maxim of "*Place aux Dames*," as the first breeding would have done more happily.---He sat next me at table, and I was abundantly amused by the mixture of matter with (almost) madness in his conversation.---"Now," said he, "you must not be surprised at my talking to you quite pleasant and affable; for though I am a lord, and you a commoner, yet as we are brothers-in-law, we should be quite easy and friendly d'ye see---not that you should be cast down at being a commoner---seeing, as how---so is many a

man ; and so I was myself once, thanks to my smiling and bowing friend there--- (Lord M.)—but what of that, you see I am all among lords and ladies now---- and my wife---my Lady W. there as bright, and as gay as any of them ; for what I say is this---and I'll stick to the maxim, that peers and peeresses, and all that belongs to them, should be quite different from the rest of the world, and have every thing about them grand and handsome ; but nothing mean, or light, or trifling about their conduct d'ye see. For why, it is just as if it was at sea in an engagement, where every one obeys the signal vessel, and acts according to the instructions issued from that, unless it be for sheering off, or the like of that, which a seaman never likes to obey ; but he must though ; for as I was saying, at sea, every thing depends upon distinctions of ranks, and so it must at land ; and if the higher officers desert their

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your Lordship," said Lord C. "because I am a knight of the garter, insist upon my always appearing in the full robes of the order?"---Why, if your Lordship always *feels* that you are one, there would be no occasion certainly ; but damme, if I know that man on earth who never requires to remember himself."---" Lord W. the honor of wine with you."----"Why, my lord, as to that, I do like a good glass, when men are all sitting quietly and sociably together ; but as for all this drinking, I do not understand or take to it at all, because I think dinner rather a time for eating, d'ye see ; however, if I must take wine, I'll take it with some of those ladies yonder ; because a peer ought always to shew attention to the ladies ; and I do not like the present fashion of speaking to them, and pushing them about, with no more respect than if they were cabin boys. Now you must tell me, for I have taken something of a liking

to you, though you have such a fair-weather face—you must tell me something about those ladies, for though they are all my wife's sisters, damme, if I'd know one from another, under those masks of paint that they wear. Who is that pale, mild, pretty looking creature, with her hair all done in that fantastic manner?" I told him that was Mrs. Bethel, and the next Mrs. Bellamy, Lady Invermay, Lady Castle-Wycomb: my eyes fell last on Lady Montrevor, but I did not utter her name. "By heavens, they all just look like a parcel of actresses; only them one would pity, because they cannot help themselves; they must do it for bread, and if they get it by making themselves spectacles, why it is the town is to blame, for encouraging them to go naked, with only a bit of gilt paper on them here and there. Why, now I ask you, Mr. Bethel, for that I find is your name, do you think it is

decent or proper, or the like of that, for an English peeress, and the mother of a large family—and, damme, she can't be young neither—by heavens her timbers must be pretty well seasoned, to go without a rag on but that glittering gauze, in which there is nothing like comfort or decency, and her bosom and arms perfectly naked? For those ornaments on them she wears for pride, and not for use, d'ye see; and that sparkling trumpery, just on the crown of her head, like a queen in a play; and those ringlets dangling from it, just like a girl of fifteen; and as beautiful and glorious a sight as she is, and damme, if ever I saw such another, except the launch of a man of war; yet, somehow, if she was rigged more like a woman of high rank, and a wedded wife, and a mother—aye, and a grandmother too, I would like her better, and she would like herself better; for, d'ye mind, when she is not

speaking and putting out all her features on a cruize for admiration, there is something like melancholy in them. Damme, now, if I drink wine with one of them, except my Lady Westhampton, when it comes to my turn."

Disgusted with his strictures, or with the object he had chosen, I turned away, and for the remainder of the time, endeavoured to extort something like conversation from Mrs. Bellamy, who sat next me. I imputed her silence and languor to pride—it was the offspring of better feelings. Bellamy, with powers to distinguish himself in society, and with a strong affection for his wife and child, was a gambler, an hopeless and incurable gambler: his unhappy wife had ceased to remonstrate, but she had not ceased to *feel*. With bitterness of heart, she saw herself blazing in precarious splendor, and reflected that it might in a moment be exchanged for the gloom of a prison. The

late change in the ministry, in depriving him of his seat in parliament, had deprived him of his only security against the most dreadful consequences of his infatuation. As these circumstances of misery developed themselves slowly, I could hardly believe myself surrounded by the first characters in the first kingdom in the world; blazing in splendor, and feasting with luxury: I could hardly conceive, that the magnificence I beheld could be allied with actual misery. I can give no other name to the situation of the Bellamy's, or to the situation of the Marquis and Marchioness of Invermay, who were literally living on an allowance that hardly amounted to a fifth of their great but involved income; an allowance made by an agent to whom their almost ruined affairs had been trusted, and who had undertaken to retrieve them only on the condition of confining the careless peer and his dissi-

pated wife, to an allowance; who supplied the deficiencies of their income, by contracting debts so enormous, that the recovery of their affairs could only be succeeded by fresh involvements. Lord and Lady C. since their marriage, twice on the eve of actual bankruptcy, now saw it again approaching, without a possibility of prevention; and the speculation on Miss M.'s marriage with Lord W. and the expedient of the pharo-bank, to be opened at Westhampton-house, were all that retrieved the sinking spirits of her ladyship, or of her numerous and fashionable, and importunate creditors.

Such was the situation of this fashionable family, of whom Lord Montrevor, whose selfishness had always preserved him from involvements, was by far the least distressed, and who now looked round upon his daughters married splendidly in the language of the world, and his sons distinguished by professional

talent and eminence, without a single sensation but that of gratified vanity, and luxury determined to sate itself with renewed opportunities of indulgence.

The ladies had hardly retired, when Lord W., eager to display his consequence to his political relations, began to inform them how he proposed qualifying himself for the arduous duty of a Patrician senator. "For, my Lord," addressing himself to Lord C. "damme if I understand what is meant by calling us pillars of the State, when we lend no support to it; so d'ye see I consented to pass the last week in all the follies of a new-married man, such as driving about the country in my new carriage with my Lady W., not sitting upon the box or dicky, or whatever you call it, being as how I think that quite scandalous and improper, for a peeress I mean; for damme if ever I saw a poor sailor's wife, going down mayhap to see her sick husband in an hospital, and with

no better seat than the outside of a stage coach, if I did not pity her from my soul in bad weather and the like of that; but to see a peeress going about in that extravagant manner is quite out of character—so I and my Lady W. sat in the same carriage always, and went about the country with the windows down, and the like, which was very pleasant for one week. But it is my intention, now that I am a peer, and to sit in debate upon the welfare of this great nation, to qualify myself a little, being as how my youth was past in quite another kind of way, as some of *us here* know, and the cause of it, but no more of that; so d'ye see I mean to get a great parcel of books together that wise men have written upon the constitution, such as my Lord Coke's and Blackstone's, and the like, and a work which some Frenchman* wrote

* De Lolme.

upon the British Constitution, which, damme, I don't see how any Frenchman could pretend to understand! and I'll read these over day and night, till I have got the sense of them d'ye see into my head: and I'll get some clever linguist to teach me Latin, and my lady is to teach me French, for, by Heavens! I'd knock down any French monseer that came near me with his damn'd jabber, though now that I am a peer it is necessary to have a little of it."

Mr. Bellamy and Lord Invermay, by this time, had in vain applied their handkerchiefs to their mouths to suppress their laughter, but Lord M. determined to conciliate his rugged son-in-law by a *coup d'essai*, intreated him to proceed with his plan, and commended every part of it with the most painful politeness. "Why then, damme, if I say another word, for I know a joke's a joke, as well as e'er a landsman or courtier among you; and

if ye all think it so damn'd ridiculous for a man among his friends to acknowledge the defects of his education, and to think himself responsible d'ye see for the duties of his high station, why then, though the laugh is on your side, the sense mayhap is on mine."

By this time Lord Castle-Wycomb, who sat next me, depressing his voice, had made some trifling observations on the state of the weather when I was in Ireland—the weather introduced the produce of the land, the agriculture, the state of the peasantry, and the difference between their condition and that of the similar class in England. He constructed the conversation so, that his part of it was merely inquiry, and mine detail. I saw his purpose, but I forgot my caution, or Lady M's. I was ambitious to shew him that Irishmen were not the degraded beings that England has a right of concluding from their scandalous desertion of their duties

and their country; I was ambitious to shew him an Irishman was not destitute of information, or dead to national feeling and spirit. I spoke of Ireland, her depressed trade, her neglected populace, her renegade nobility, her dissipated, and careless, and unnational gentry. I spoke of the country as deteriorated by a religion, which, in every country where it had prevailed, had extinguished all spirit, but the spirit of superstition—a religion alike unfavorable to morality, industry, and improvement—a religion, which by establishing an internal principle of operation superior to law or government, must be intrinsically and invincibly hostile to law and government, and compounding for the duties of a divine system by a prescription of its forms, destroyed the very essentials of religion. I spoke of the first and fairest countries in Europe destitute of cultivation, and degraded in their national spirit and cha-

racter by its influence—a lesson which had not yet made us wise. I spoke of Ireland peculiarly suffering from its influence, because in other countries it was connected with the government, and therefore taught subordination to it; in Ireland it was not avowedly but inveterately at war with the civil establishment, and must remain so till it had assimilated it to itself. I spoke of the curse and reproach of Ireland being the want of national education, a want which must always remain, while the priests of that religion in *many countries anathematize* those who send their children to Protestant schools, and those to whom they are sent; yet are utterly averse to any system of national education themselves, and indeed in general incapable of framing or executing one; so that the children of the peasantry are sent by hundreds to an hovel where some squalid wretch, for a miserable pittance, teaches

them to mangle the English language without religious instruction, or selection of books, or any species of discipline or order, literary or moral. I spoke of ministers being so immersed in the details and officials of business, as to neglect, not unfrequently, its principle and object; that Ireland was not a country to be civilized by temporizing concessions, and partial provisions: that nothing could insure her safety or welfare, but diminishing the power that lacerated and convulsed her entrails, or *establishing it altogether*; that that power was ambitious and would not easily be satisfied, was strong and could not be easily resisted; that the influence that contended with it, and hoped to contend successfully, must be directed to the minds, not the persons or properties of its professors; that the latter policy was equally illegal and unsuccessful, as oppression only tends to heighten the merit of suffering, or the

dignity of resistance, and a loose and incoherent mass may be crushed into coalition by vehement pressure; that they who hoped to diminish the evils of Ireland must begin by diminishing the influence of the Romish priests on the minds of the people, by procuring them independent support, and not suffering mutual confidence to be strengthened by mutual services, must facilitate the diffusion of knowledge (an event always unfavorable to that religion) by the promotion of national education; and by, in some manner, restraining the desertion of the country by its higher orders, in some measure procure a balance to that bloated and overweening majority which always exceeded us in population, and now threatened to equal us in opulence and power. I traced without any hesitation the increasing magnitude of the evils by which my unhappy country was overborne to the fatal measure of the

Union—a measure which had diminished her population, impoverished her metropolis, depressed her internal business (in the single article of printing I instanced the *fact* of the Dublin press now being kept open only by pamphlets and newspapers), and above all, by encouraging, and in a manner rendering necessary, the non-residence of her nobility, had completely suspended the great and beginning work of national humanization, by removing those on whom it must depend equally for its principle and its operation. I observed that this fatal measure could not probably be now recalled, but might certainly be alleviated.

I was proceeding to speak to the point of its having been attended with all the evils that had been foreseen, but not one of the advantages which had been promised, viz. the equalization of commercial and other privileges, which had not been obtained; the importation of English

improvements and English natives, which had *not* been obtained; and perfect security from internal commotion and danger, which had *not* been obtained—inasmuch as on the 23d of July, 1803, a troop of rebels marched within half a furlong of the Castle of Dublin, the seat of a military governor. I was proceeding to speak to these and other points, when I was checked by the total silence with which my observations were received, and by the reflexion that *there* they could expect no better reception—I bowed and was silent.

I am by no means giving the language which I used on this occasion—I am sensible it was much more animated and picturesque, and such as probably to leave no unfavorable impression of the mind of him who uttered it—I have only retained the substance of what I said. After a few attempts at desultory conversation, the party separated; as we retired, Lord C.

who never appeared in her ladyship's drawing-room in the evenings, drew me aside, and, after a few favorable expressions, requested that I would favor him with my company at breakfast in his apartment the following morning, as the pressure of business occupied every other part of his day.

The assembly in the drawing-room was unusually numerous and splendid: Lady Castle-Wycomb was fashionable, Lady M. was still more so; but, superior to all other attractions, the high play which distinguished Lady C.'s assemblies, ensured them a brilliant and tumultuous croud, whenever her doors were opened. The business of the night had begun, when I entered the drawing-rooms: every face was cloudy with deliberation, and that mixture of hope and fear, with which every gambler commences the contest. The few loungers, who were unemployed at first, were soon tempted, by the ardor of the scene, to

engage in bets ; success or disappointment alternately induced them to augment these from trifles to sums which made rouleaus disappear in a moment ; and in a short time the betters were as ardent and as clamorous as the players.

At one of the highest tables, stimulated with all the passions of the place, animated with success, and increasing the vexation of the losers, by the perfect, but laborious ease of her manner, and triumph of her wit, Lady M. burst on my eyes, as I entered—I withdrew them. I knew at that moment she was as miserable as she was dazzling, stifling the struggles of her mind, and the reproaches of her heart, in the intoxications of vanity, to which wretchedness had driven her, and from which augmented wretchedness could not drive her away. Never had the world such a victim—I knew her heart—I knew its principles, its pride, its agony at the very

moment when every feature was radiant with apparent joy and splendor almost beyond human brightness. I wished for Mr. Corbett—I wished for some one with an angel's office, and an angel's power to call back this unhappy woman from a course into which the want of domestic happiness and early stability had driven her, and in which she still persisted from pride and despair: but who could have read pride and despair in those angel-features, warm with artificial beauty, and sparkling with artificial joy!

I knew not the cause of her peculiar gaiety of triumph that night, till I learnt from Lord Invermay, who was a kind of fashionable *diable boiteux* to me, as we lounged through the rooms, that her unsuccessful adversaries were the Duchess of ——— and the *Rees*, an enormous figure enveloped in scarlet velvet and blazing with diamonds, whose ill-luck and boisterous complaints ludi-

crously contrasted the airy triumph of her opponent. I looked round for Athanasia, she had retired to the apartment of *Madame*. I was vexed at this dereliction of herself—I was elevated by the splendor around me—I wished her to partake of it, and to be seen to partake of it, instead of wasting her hours in the society of a woman whose principles appeared to have poisoned her mind, and whose conversation generally left her bathed in the tears of a vitiated sensibility. I took the worst way possible of concealing my vexation—I accepted a proposal of Mr. Bellamy's to engage in a game at piquet at the corner of a vacant card-table; from which, just as supper was announced, I rose a winner of seventy guineas, which appeared to be paid with much less pain than it was received; the stake, however, my antagonist had named himself.

At supper the party was increased by the addition of Lady Delphina

Orberry, and her party, from the Opera. They were in raptures; but the slight and discriminating praises of Lady Delphina, ushered by a diffident apology, and breathed in tones of languid melody, made a deeper impression on me than almost the sounds they praised.

From the moment of her entrance Lady M. redoubled her efforts to delight and to dazzle: Lady Delphina retreated from the contest, but, like the Parthian, was most dangerous in retreat. Her soft, seducing manner, her timid silence, her melting whispers, and her warm and delicate applause of the wit and talents which the whole room echoed with applauses of, almost divided the victory. I could not believe her the dreadful, the dangerous woman Lady M. had said she was—she was seated next me. “How exquisitely beautiful she is, more beautiful than ever I think; by what happy exemption has she escaped the haggard look

of dissipation, which has even stole over her *daughters'* lovely faces. Exquisite sensibility, I perceive, is the greatest enemy to beauty. Poor Lady M.—I am glad she has forgot—or forgot to feel—the melancholy events at the early part of her life: they would have destroyed any one but her. Then she succeeded so well, in getting those appointments for her sons, and marrying her daughters, no sacrifices could be too great for such services to her family. Then she is always *so successful* at play—so brilliant, and always seems so happy. I really think her more lovely to-night, than when I first saw her twenty years past at Rome. If you wish to see her as she was then, and judge from the comparison, I have a picture of her, by an Italian artist, at my house in South Audley Street: come and see it, and I am convinced you will be of my opinion. She was rather thinner, and did not wear quite so much

rouge and pearl-powder; but whatever she wears becomes her. Will you come and see the picture to-morrow?" This was addressed to me with that soft simplicity of manner that made every thing Lady Delphina said and did, naïve and unsuspecting and casual.

Week followed week in careless dissipation—no day differed from another, except such diversity as fashionable indolence admits. My mornings were generally passed with Lord C. W. who dismissed me with such praises of my talents and spirit, as were even then offensive to me; declared that I must distinguish myself; that we *wanted such men*; that my ideas only required a little more maturity, and my feelings a little more regulation, &c. &c. and then fixed me for some fashionable party of dissipation, the following night.

From the ministerial and political dinners, I perceived I was studiously ex-

cluded—the exclusion was no mortification to me: with the pride of a man conscious of untried capacity, I wished not to seek, but to be sought for.—I wished them to think me an Henry Prince of Wales, till they saw me *in the field*. The mornings were passed after leaving Lord C. W. in resolutions to devote some hours to study, or in search of some distinguished characters in literature or in public life; resolutions perpetually broke by a summons, or rather a subpœna, to some exhibition, where I could see nothing but the rouged cheeks and haggard eyes of the gamesters of the preceding night; or a fashionable *lecture*, where I could *hear* nothing but the prattlement of the *listeners*; or a sale, where, too often urged by the impulse of the place, I engaged in a species of auction-gambling, which speculates on the ambition of your adversary, till you find yourself incumbered by a

profusion of articles which you do not want, purchased for a sum you cannot spare. Bond Street occupied the remainder of the day, till it was time to dress for a dinner at one of my fashionable brothers-in-law, and the evenings subsided into the gloomy silence of deliberate gaming.

Fatal as this mode of life was to my peace and principles, the infatuation of its splendour and luxury was resistless. I lived among fashion and beauty; among those who had always the power of stimulating my senses, if not of gratifying the mind; but both powers were so united in Lady M.; she had so much the art of giving variety and poignancy to the insipidity of fashion; and making even caprice and vanity *nouvelle* and *recherche*; she was still so brilliant in crowds, and so interesting in solitude to me, who knew what solitude must be to her, that no hour

seemed even mispent, on its retrospect, that had been spent with her.

It was now fashionable for all who admired wit, or its reputation, to attend her *dejeune* in Berkeley Square; that is, crowd to her dressing-room, from twelve till three; apply your glass, when any distinguished face entered the room; disarrange the new publications that were scattered on the pier-tables and chimney-piece, without perusing them; press into the circle that surrounded her; tell the trifles of the day, in a whisper, or catch some half-heard, and not half-understood, *bon mot* of her Ladyship's, whose repetition gave you the credit of having been at the *ruelle* of the modern Aspasia. Lady C. W. actually neglected, in her own apartment, was at length obliged to join forces; and, by her volubility and dashing manner, effect something like a *division* in her own favor; but Lady C. W. had resources of notoriety, to which Lady M. never could have stooped. Her beau-

tiful villa, near Brighton, the designs for decorating which had been furnished by the pencil of a noble amateur, was still unfinished ; the designs enveloped in a superb port-folio, had lain on her dressing-room table, till every one was weary of gazing at them, and her ladyship was weary of being asked when the whole charming thing would be finished ?"—Lord C. had actually interdicted all further operations of the artists at Brighton. It was in vain that her ladyship remonstrated, and intreated ; and, at length, swore in very audible terms, she would be revenged. No brain but a female's could have devised such a revenge. Lord C. like many others who have no children, was somewhat impatient of his misfortune, to which the slightest allusion offended him irretrievably. Her ladyship, like many other fashionable wives, had professed herself extremely happy at the exemption from a

state of peril and suffering, and *confinement*; but now she assumed quite another language—deplored her misfortune and his *lordship's*, in language of the most delicate grief; declared there could be no felicity in life, without children; and to console herself for the privation, fitted up an elegant baby-nursery within her dressing-room, decorated a fashionable hammock, with sattin furniture, and placed in it, half-buried in lace, an enormous wax baby; while all the ornaments of this fanciful nursery were heightened by groups of genii strewing poppies, classic deities watching the slumbers of infancy, &c. &c. from the emblematic pencil of *Hope*. Her friends were all admitted into the apartment—compelled to commend her taste, and to pity her *misfortune*; and to make the ridicule insupportable, a female attendant, with the *infant* in her arms, accompanied her ladyship in the

carriage in the Park, Bond Street, &c. Lord C. was distracted; her ladyship was perfectly calm: he forbade the carriages leaving the stable, when her ladyship ordered them for her *poupet*. Her ladyship went in her friend, the Rees's barouche. At length a kind of pacific negotiation commenced between them, the conditions of which no one was acquainted with; but the result I learned too soon.

While this *etourderie* lasted, the effect was very perceptible on the loungers in Lady M.'s dressing-room: every creature flew to the nursery, except the scavans, whose faces were pointed out to me by Mr. Bellamy, a man in whom the fatal rage of gaming, though it had destroyed the habit of better things, had neither destroyed their power nor their taste. "That young man with the striking appearance and dishevelled hair," said he, "is the celebrated writer, who produces *epic poems*, as others

would sonnets. I am sure his appearance here is quite involuntary and irksome, for no man ever had a more democratic mind ; but its democracy was not vulgar or atrocious ; his attachment to it was rather an attachment to a sound than a system : a sound to which he annexed an ardent but confused meaning, and of which he has, probably by this time, discovered the emptiness and fallacy.”—“ I have read his poems,” said I, “ to me they strongly bear the marks of a mind forced and flattered into an early maturity ; a man who versified before he had read or thought, and who still continues to versify, without often calling on either reading or thought for assistance. He certainly possesses imagination, but never was imagination less purified by taste : his embellishments are grotesque and laboured, and voluminous : they strike by exaggeration, and do not shine, but glare. His sentiments are ge-

nerally pure, but it is prosaic and common-place morality, in the bloated and uneasy garb of a versified homily. His *descriptions* and *manners* are certainly pure; and perhaps no other praise can be compared to that which S—th—y has deserved, of having given to the public, in early youth, a mass of pages, from which modesty would not wish to expunge a single line: were I the gentleman's friend, I would wish him to alter his line of study. His appears to be a mind that has adopted its habits of reading too much from a fantastic and misguided choice. I believe his literary education has had no restraint, and no adviser. His mind, if I may judge from his *notes*, appears to be inveterately depraved; by a course of reading which has starved his understanding, and fed his fancy with the most morbid food. The legends of superstition, antient and modern; the gleanings of monkish fabu-

lists; the researches of mystic science; the wonders of the invisible world, however related, or however attested, all that 'fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived, Gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire,' appear to constitute all the resources of his library, and of his mind; and so desirous is he of accumulating the shades of horror on us, that he mingles the mythology of different ages and nations; introduces the vampire-tales of Hungary and Greece, into Arabia; and arms the wizard on the banks of the Euphrates, with the *hand of glory*, one of the darkest fictions of Western superstition. Every part of his writings has assumed the complexion of a sombrous and melancholy mind, darkened almost to despondency, by peculiar habits of reading. When he is merry, he tells us the story of Cornelius Agrippa and his bloody book: when he is grave, he rehearses a legend from Matthew Pa-

ris : when he gives political instruction, it is by the vision of the Maid of Orleans ; a vision such as never floated before ' the eye, in a fine phrenzy rolling ; ' a vision compounded of the murky fumes of querulous democracy, and shapeless delirium ; and when he gives morality, it is the quaint and garnished, and sententious wisdom of the East, so mixed and beat out with fantastic decorations, that it resembles an illuminated page of the Alcoran—a line of plain and ordinary sense hid among the flourishings and foliages of tasteless blazonry. No part of this writer's works offends me so much as his style—I mean that garrulous and drivelling simplicity of manner, by which he and his contemporaries are distinguished. Nothing can be more unfortunate than a *struggle for ease*—a giant walking on his hands and knees, does not resemble an infant ; he loses his own part and powers, and gains no-

thing by the loss—except ridicule. The labour for magnificence generally attains its object—the labour of simplicity always defeats it. His subject and his style make his works resemble a spectre dressed out by a child—its very horrors have something weak and ludicrous in them: his mind is a *thesaurus terrorum*—he dwells for ever in the ‘Domdaniel caverns under the bed of ocean.’ I wish he would remember, that, at no period of life is it too late to begin to read, or that he would at least read, and allow me to prescribe his studies, before he begins to write again.”

A figure very different from the last, now entered—a young man of diminutive stature, but an intelligent countenance, and a most easy and felicitous address. “I fear,” said Belamy, “you can hardly bestow the praise of purity, on the productions of your *countryman*, Anacreon M—re.”—“I fear,” said I, “the want of that

praise excludes him from more. The merit of a writer must be in some measure connected with that of his subject; and the subjects that writer has chosen, are such as exclude all praise but that of brilliant levity of sentiment, and exquisite versification. By what evil genius his choice was directed, I cannot conceive, but I lament its influence has been equally unfortunate for poetry, and for himself. He was formed to enlarge her territories and her honors; but, like *Vasco*, his expedition has terminated in being *thrown away* on the Island of Love. A dull writer defeats the mischief of his own depravity; but the pointed and polished shafts of M—re, like those of his favourite deity, tingle in the blood, with delicious irritation; and convey sweet—sweet poison, through the most balmy and seductive medium. I speak of him with real sorrow: he might have done much, he has done no-

thing, but what I hope he will yet wish undone. No writer I have ever read, possessed so much the power of picturesque, and living description of nature; or of luscious, and yet lively and uncloying harmony of sound. He is a writer of whose powers the world (or perhaps himself) can no more form a just estimate, than we could of Pope, from his paraphrase on the first Psalm, or of Homer, if we had read no more than his Loves of Venus and Anchises. Before the wreath of his fancy had well bloomed, he hung their *blushing honors* on the image of the Garden God. I fear no other power will now receive his vows—It is possible to injure the mind's eye, as well as the bodily, by a constant contemplation of one object: the object that M—re has contemplated, must of itself give an obliquity to the intellectual sight. He has talked and written of love, or of what he imagined to be love,

till I fear he can no longer write on any thing else. His ideas, which like those of every writer, must, in some measure, be supplied from external sources, do not appear to me to be drawn from sources either deep or various. I am afraid, like his own *Little*, he has only read what he pleased, as well as written what he pleased. If his reading has been extensive, the power of assimilation which his mind possesses must be amazingly strong. It is a perfect fountain of salmacis, whatever enters it becomes voluptuous and debilitated. His language, which at first presents an endless and unwearying range of diversified elegance, if closely examined, betrays repetition artfully concealed, like the boundaries of the gardens of the Serail, it escapes the eye under a fence of roses.

It is painful to speak with severity of a man whose suavity of manner and facility of information, and easy dissipa-

tion of life, present a kind of innocent and infantine luxury. But we should remember that the levities of a man are vices in an author. No man need publish the frolics of his intemperance, or expose the nudities of his indulgence. While Alcibiades riots in the recesses of his luxury, the injury is only done to himself; but when he sallies out to outrage sanctity, the offence becomes serious and cognizable. For a man possessing so many powers of giving delight, between whose lips and whose pen harmony seems to have divided her existence, eminently skilled in pleasing those whom all are proud to please, capable of effecting the rare union of sentiment with sound, of being the poet of the senses, and the minstrel of the heart; for such a man there may be, there must be a thousand excuses, if he sinks into the softnesses around him; but for the attempt to communicate what he must

have felt the injuries of himself, for the attempt to add seduction to pleasure, and teach impurity a new system of sentimental logic, to add an impulse to the lapse of vicious feeling, and modulate the *death dance* of vice with the harmony of a lyre strung by heaven ; for this—there is—there can be no excuse, even at the bar of literature ; and if he carries the cause to an higher court, I doubt still more tremblingly his acquittal there.”

As I spoke, Bellamy pointed out to me the most distinguished novelist of the day. He was at some distance examining one of the morning papers, of which every column was filled with the political dinners, and fashionable fetes of our nobility ; anecdotes or hints of private history, of marriages in speculation, and divorces in practice, with an interesting detail of fashionable arrivals in town, and expectations of fashionable arrivals. The splendor of Lady Montrevor’s arri-

val ; and the pleasure over the world of fashion distinguished every paragraph explicitly or implicitly. " Those are the sources," whispered Bellamy, " from which the vitious taste of our fashionable novel-readers has compelled this writer to draw his materials. He certainly possesses feeling, and some power of communicating those feelings. Without any knowledge of the modes of *composition*, or the benefit, I believe, of a regular education, he has certainly the power of representing and exciting the stronger passions in no trivial degree. But these and all his powers, whatever they *might* be, he is compelled to sacrifice to that preposterous appetite for the garbage of fashionable anecdote, which our novel readers demand ; and with which our novel writers, if professional, are compelled to comply. His *first* novel, which was founded on a popular play, and represents the ruin of a feeling and ar-

dent boy by the arts of a courtesan, is more fit for any library than a circulating library. I mean it possesses strong power of exciting the feelings, but few details of fashionable life. His succeeding works, however, have gradually sunk in the scale of composition, and risen in that of reputation. His last novel, which is a melancholy *mélange* of extracts from morning papers, information extracted from the menials of noble families, and hints from manuscript histories—the paltry legends of obscurity and spleen---His last novel has gone through numberless editions, completely satisfied the curiosity of novel readers, and mine, after the first ten pages : yet such are the men whom we compel to neglect the cultivation of their talents, and the attainment of just and permanent reputation, for the important task of supplying the defective conjectures of a newspaper about a fashionable involve-

ment, and a fashionable marriage ; and sparing our loungers the trouble of yawning away the interval between breakfast and the lounge in Bond Street."

I spoke of the deplorable deficiency of English novels, and of the difficulty of finding one which combined a faithful representation of life, with just modes of reasoning, and a forcible inculcation of good principles. "The difficulty is certainly great," said Bellamy, "but to the honor of your country, I think an Irish female writer has overcome that difficulty."----I joined with him in his warmest commendations of Miss Edgeworth's *Belinda*, "which for a strong and masterly delineation of the passions, which yet never over-steps the modesty of nature, for a blaze of colloquial wit, heightened by fashion, and refined by taste, and for a strong, local, and circumstantial detail of life, a representation of the greater effects of life produced by

partial causes, and the influence of the lesser passions, and casual incidents affecting the temper, and the conduct, more than novellists allow us to suppose, for the preservation of the *false unique*---for these features of character and mind, I do not hesitate to pronounce *Belinda* a work that has never been equalled, and, perhaps, never will be equalled; for it requires in the author habits of study, and habits of acquaintance with life, an intimacy with the stronger passions, and an observation of the minuter shades of manner, which, perhaps, nature and education never combined to unite in any female, but the writer of *Belinda*."—This was Bellamy's speech, and my sentiment. Lady M. with true diplomatic facility, had addressed every one in the circle, told Mr. S—th—y, that he possessed in his vivid imagination, a more powerful spell than all the sorcerers in the caverns of Domdaniel, whispered

M—re, that his compositions were almost enough to make her renounce the true Italian faith, and turn an English heretic, in her musical principles ; and told the novelist, that if to paint insanity was one of the highest privileges of talent, she could not think too highly of his, after reading the ravings of the Somnambulist, in his Spl — nd — d M — s — ry, and the horrid, real picture of domestic insanity in the short specimen of the “ Hetherington in his W — nt — r in L — nd — n,” --- when a note was delivered to her Ladyship from Lord M. who was at the King’s levee. Her ladyship in her triumph read it to the company : government had just received information of the complete success of the British forces in the recent expedition ; the details were of the most favourable nature, and Col. Montolieu, who had eminently distinguished himself on the occasion, was hourly expected

with the official dispatches. The affectionate energy of Lady M.'s triumph was contagious, the congratulations were loud and sincere, and the national joy was said to be augmented by its being owed to a family distinguished by their rank and talents and triumph.

Lady M. with a step that seemed to disdain the earth, approached where we were reading the note, that had been handed round the circle. "All this joy is very delightful, and very oppressive, it has actually overcome me.--- I want breath--- I want air—Did not they sacrifice to Good Fortune in the open air formerly, Mr. S. ? I shall make no trifling sacrifice in quitting this circle." (She bowed.---) "My chariot is at the door," said Bellamy, "you can avoid the delay of ordering your own." "No chariot for me, but a triumphal one. Mr. Bethel, I think I see your phaeton : I'll go in *it*, and take you with me, as the ancient conquerors

took some one to *remind them of their humanity.*" The last words were marked by strong and painful emphasis.

As I drove her to the Park, we were every moment detained by groups of fashionables, who were endeavouring to excite their vapid spirits, by an assumed solicitude about our success, and magnify their consequence, by addressing the mother of the hero of the day in public. The streets were unusually crowded. When we got out of them, Lady M. who had been all life and animation during our progress, suddenly became silent, and sighing heavily, let her arms fall like a person quite exhausted; her attitudes, her language, her air of pride and joy disappeared at once. I enquired was she unwell? for such was the facility and spirit with which she played her artificial character, that at times it deceived even me. "Yes---perfectly so; but may I not drop the mask for a moment, and

with you---What a morning, and what a night, and what a past week, and what a *past life*; and yet I dare not pause, not even to think, for that is the most exquisite misery of all!---“ Misery ? ”----“ Yes; do you think Splendid Misery only the title of a novel? It is the inscription of real life, fashionable life.---I cannot go on this way, 'tis impossible, 'tis distracting. I thought when I was absent, of these things as the most important in the world, their presence has undeceived me. To see Lady Delphina, and the Rees, and the Duchess, and the rest, or rather to be seen by them again, was only the triumph of a moment, if it was a triumph at all. Some of them have too much address to *allow* my triumph over them; and some of them too much insensibility to *afford* me any at all.---When I was absent, I only thought of *them*, now that I am among them, I can only think of *myself*. They who climb a precipice only see the object before them;

when they have reached the summit, they have leisure to tremble for themselves. But it is all in vain, let me tremble or fall, there is no hand to save me. Lord M. will not release me, if I had courage to wish for release. It *was* in the *Bond*, that if I returned to London, I should live or die in London. He will not remit the penalty. I will never beg his mercy; he knows his power, and let him use it." "I do not understand this painful and mysterious language." "No matter, I have no wish that you should; yet you might understand *me* well enough to know, that reputation true or false was the idol to which I have sacrificed every thing, to which I am sacrificing myself—Can you understand the pride that loves to stand on the very edge of the precipice, to tread the precise barrier-line between safety and danger, without one false step?----Can you understand that to such pride the bare suspicion of one false step would be

worse than death? and that suspicion the meanest and most depraved wretch may blast us with. Am I intelligible enough when I tell you of an husband who indulged, who impelled his wife to the brink of shame, and would have impelled her further, if she would have gone; merely because judging from his own mind, he believed mutual confidence could only be produced by mutual guilt, and he wished to have a security for her silence on the subject of his vices, and her concurrence in all his schemes of wickedness and folly; and when, at length, he found her sensibility of even false shame more exquisite than he could have believed it was of true, compounding for the absence of real power, by erecting a false and tyrannical one, and goading her by the terrors of imputed guilt to every step; because he knows that to her the bare imputation is more insupportable than the reality to another."

My blood boiled at this infamous cruelty; I urged her to defy him, to follow the path her natural principles and high spirit pointed out to her, and suffer no false and vicious impulse to drive her from it.---“Defy Lord M.—Ah! you know nothing of him or of me. It is his wish, it is his object to devise some means of separation from me. I hate and dread and despise him. I have long, long done so; but I hate and dread public infamy still more---He knows it---The levities to which his neglect, or his art drove me; the painful struggles of a shackled mind, those levities might, I know, be magnified and misrepresented into something that would bear a construction in any court *on earth*. He knows it too---and with this sword suspended over my head, I sit at the feast in pride and agony, depending on the mercy of one who has no mercy---no principle---no motive to spare me, but

the caprice which may have ceased while I am deprecating it."

My heart bled for her, for that high and fatal feeling of vanity, which had been the cause of all her misery, and which menaced still more. Her mind wanting nothing of actual rectitude, but the courage to avow its choice and pursuit of it, had lost the merit of clandestine virtue, and hazarded the shame of artificial depravity. I tried to speak, but my words were lost. I was myself plunging into the involvements of dissipation---I was myself beginning to feel its restless unhappiness.---I could not console her.--"Would you believe," said she, after a pause, "that of the earnestness with which I pressed your removal to London, the real motive was my vanity. I wished you to *see me* here---I am sufficiently punished---you *have* seen me here, and seen me miserable. The fatal ardor with which I entered on my

fictitious character, has actually made it a real one; mental defects may be acquired like bodily ones, by mockery. Vanity is with me a kind of galvanic principle of existence, that produces the motions of life, after its spirit is gone. I am sufficiently punished by these moments of wretchedness and truth. I am not at ease enough for further hypocrisy—I care not how much I am degraded in your eyes, and my own—I care not if all the world knew how wretched I am this moment; but they never *shall* know it—they would ascribe it to guilt. In justice to myself, I must be a dissembler—I must conceal my anguish—I must smile on the rack, or they will not believe me innocent!---I wish I was dead!---I wish I had the courage of innocence to die, or even the courage of despair. Lord Montrevor, I dare say, will supply me with that ere long. Beyond the day that my name is exposed to public shame, I

will not live! My life set out with the murder, the actual murder of the best of beings, it will probably end with an expiatory sacrifice to his memory."

I was chilled with horror: her voice became inarticulate---tears of agony and despair forced themselves through the veil which she had drawn over her---

"Let us return, you are agitated, and so am I---too much so to say all I feel of grief, and honor, and love for you. I would die, by heaven, I *would* die to give you relief, or vindication! Compose yourself; let us return---laudanum is a dreadful resource; but it will at least stimulate your spirits, and banish this dreadful despondency."----"No---no---I see, I *feel* an excitement much more strong approaching. I see Lady Delphina Orberry's barouche, and its owner, so "drive on, my merry men all; for why, my foe beholds my fate, the *Orberry* sees me fall." No, that she never shall!---turn your horses heads---I am

quite well---quite composed---*c'est mon foible*, or my strength rather. Is the rouge washed off my face? Or does this veil conceal it? They must not see Lady Montrevor's mind or face either in their *natural colours*."

We passed, and Lady Delphina expressed her pleasure at the event of the day, and the Colonel's distinguished share in it, in tones that no common ear could have distinguished from those of affectionate sincerity.—As we parted, Lady Delphina's footman followed me with his Lady's compliments, that she had learned "*Ah, quanto l'anima*," that her harp was in perfect order, and she would be at home at nine in the evening. I was disconcerted, surprized—I did not understand the addressee of this intimation, which was in fact, intended more for Lady Montrevor than for me. Lady M. took advantage of my silence, "Mr. Bethel's *compliments wait* on her Ladyship, he ac-

companies me to the theatre this evening." We were both silent for a moment. "I wished to speak to you about this, but from modesty, or some other cause, I always begin to speak of myself; now in the case of *Lady Delphina*, or her heart plaintiff, and *Mr. Bethel*, or his blushes defendant."---Allow me to ask, *don't* you go constantly to South Audley Street?---"I do go frequently."---"And you receive notes of invitation, sealed with the impression, *ne manquez pas de venire*." "That is, that *must* be, I mean, *accidental*?" "And you hear her Ladyship sing? I know her harp is always in perfect order for *Ah quanto l'anima*, or any tender air!" "I have heard her sing with almost as much pleasure as I have heard you." "And not more erudition?" "Less." "On either part?" "On either part." "But that was not the case when you listened to her Ladyship speaking—or *felt* her speak-

ing? for she can speak with her eyes--
la lingua d'amore." "If she does, it is
unintelligible to me." "And what forms
the attraction that draws you every
evening, as I am credibly informed by
my knowledge of the human counte-
nance, to South Audley Street?" "The
extreme simplicity of her manners, her
exquisite taste in music; in every thing.
Her aversion to crowds, and my aversion
to them, and the mild and refreshing
light that seems to be effused from her
person and manner, so balmy to my sight
seared as it is with the glare of fashion."
"You can accuse yourself of no other
motive?" "The *law*," said I, laughing,
"does not compel a man to accuse him-
self." "To leave this keen encounter of
our wits, or our follies, let me again
warn you of Lady Delphina. Beware of
any woman who will not be *satisfied with*
admiration; who wishes to excite a
softer, a deeper feeling, particularly
when that woman has *no feeling*, knows

no passion, but the horrid passion of the senses, and would sacrifice to that *all mankind*, as she has sacrificed herself! Beware of her---drive *round* the Square.

I have one word more to say to you—it relates to one, who should be a more interesting object to either of us than Lady Delphina Orberry—I speak of your wife. My knowledge of the human heart never deceived me, except when I thought I knew my own. Athanasia has an heart—a gentle, fond, feminine heart—it loves you—can you break it? “I would sooner stab my own; by all that is sacred, I love Athanasia, love her more than she believes I can, more than I believed I could—love her amid dejection and melancholy, of which I cannot discover the cause. I feel I could be a domestic, could be a happy man, could Athanasia assume the appearance of a happy wife. I will say nothing of the versatility of human feelings, or of the

ease with which the heart resigns its first and favorite impressions; but I can believe, from *experience*, that the mental eye may be dazzled at first by a blaze of beauty and *m  niere*—may believe that it has lost all power of admitting any other object, and yet may afterwards repose with pleasure on the softer shades of domestic mildness, and female suavity, and feel its powers recover, and feel them filled and gratified by their new exercise.”

“The allusion is very charming and philosophical; but all philosophy must be established by experiment—and now *pour faire l'experiment*—don't go to-night to Lady Delphina Orberry. “But politeness—common politeness——” “Oh, common politeness every one is equal to, and above. To-night the Royal Family go to the Theatre; this great intelligence will of course fill the house: John Bull loves to shew his joy in public. We

must be there, as we have more than a public feeling to gratify—*all our family* ought to be there; I assure you the spectacle will be amazingly striking, you should on no account miss it, exclusive of the satisfaction of *doing the right thing*—an inducement on which I may lay particular stress, for as I never experienced it in my life, my recommendation must be totally unbiassed. Now let me run in, and call to Bennet for fresh rouge and fresh spirits as soon as possible, before I am compelled to hear or make any more speeches—*selon l'occasion*.”

I handed her from the phaeton, and she glided into the hall with the grace of an Ariel. I could not feel the glow of pride, as a number of loungers stopped to see the fashionable Lady Montrevor, as I assisted her from the phaeton, but it was succeeded by a sting of anguish, when I recollected that the

beautiful hand whose touch made me so proud, had but a few moments past been in vain employed to wipe away tears of the bitterest agony.

At night, however, Lady Montrevor's triumph was complete; the house was crowded; the Royal Family appeared in high spirits, and were greeted with the loudest acclamations of national joy and loyalty. Occasional addresses, music and scenery hastily sketched, but appropriate and animating, diversified the entertainment; and every one who had a military or naval relative engaged in the expedition, felt their consequence increased and their pleasure magnified. But the applauses were almost inextinguishable when Lord Montrevor led in his lady, all radiance, and triumph, and beauty! Not a trace of the morning's agony in her features; her rouge, and her diamonds, and the splendid animation of her whole form literally making the eye shrink from the lustre;

and when rising at the performance of the appropriate music, they returned the loud applauses of the audience with the graceful humility of pride, and casting their eyes around them saw every box sparkling with the relatives of their numerous and splendid family, who had all assembled to claim their share of the public pride and joy, who would not have repeated the favorite exclamation of all around them—" Lord and Lady Montrevor are the happiest pair in the world."

The crowd was so great, that in going out, *our party* (by far the most numerous) completely obstructed the lobby, after the departure of the Royal Family ; the rest, with an occasional impulse of respect, fell back, and the long procession of the mother and sisters and relatives of the hero of the day moved on in pride and splendor, such as even to witness was, in some measure, to partake

Athanasia, fatigued with the tumult of the night, had proposed going home, but just as the cry of "Lady Invermay's carriage stops the way" announced that ours was yet at a distance, she fainted in my arms: Lady Invermay insisted on her going into *her* carriage, and I followed in my solicitude for her recovery. At Lady Invermay's a large party had assembled to sup, but a few moments remained for play; those moments, however, were protracted to hours, by the increasing interest of the pursuit. I had sat down to picquet with Bellamy, intoxicated with the spirit of the evening, and careless of success, I returned home about five in the morning completely sobered by the loss of twelve hundred guineas. I always had a taste for dissipation, it recurred to me strongly now: the insipidity of fashionable life can only be rendered tolerable by the stimulation of high play. I struggled in vain with the

infatuation—my feelings had become the slaves of my senses. I felt I was gradually relinquishing the distinctions of public life for its splendour and luxury. I cursed my voluptuous debility, and determined when I rose the next day about two, to compel Lord Castle-Wycomb to an explicit declaration of his intentions towards me; to inform him that my object in public life was not profit but distinction, and that distinction in England was easily attainable by every man who could *write*.

I left Athanasia still in bed; but as I crossed Berkeley Square it occurred to me, that Lord Castle-Wycomb was engaged with the Cabinet Ministers just at that hour, in consequence of the recent intelligence; and that in the interval some apology was owing to Lady Delphina Orberry, for the neglect of the preceding evening. As I approached her door, Lord Montrevor's chariot drove from it;

who was in it I could not discover, but I was tolerably certain it could not be *Lady Montrevor*. I knew Lord M. was a man of gallantry, I heard Lady Delphina was a woman of gallantry—I could hardly have credited the evidence of my senses had they told me so. Her simplicity, her gentleness, the sigh with which she regretted the absence of pure and delicate pleasures, and the resources she possessed for exciting even apathy, and diversifying solitude—resources displayed without ambition, and exerted without effort (resources so unlike those of Lady Montrevor, whose painful and restless brilliancy left the strained and dazzled listener weary, and exhausted herself to despondency that was recruited with laudanum); all this must have pleased the man for whom such powers were exerted — all this had made me think or feel, perhaps, with such a woman love might divest solitude of weariness, and existence of pain.

Lady Delphina was not at home, she had just gone out in the barouche. I was beginning to distrust the intelligence, when the servant (depressing his voice) informed me that his lady had directed him, if I called, to inform me that she was at Madame La Tour's, her milliner's, in Tavistock Street. Utterly ignorant of the peculiar intelligence of this message; and believing my apology could as well be made at Madame La Tour's as in South Audley Street, I proceeded there. I saw several male and female loungers in the shop: I strolled into the splendid ware-room — Lady Delphina was not there; I was unwilling to enquire for her — I was unwilling to have the appearance of a fashionable trifler, who dangled patiently after fashionable females to their milleners: *une jolie fillette*, with her black hair arranged *à l'Egyptienne*, saw my perplexity, and whispered me that Lady

Delphina was in the *boudoir* of the back drawing-room.

I ascended the stairs, and entered a room which seemed to have been formed and furnished by the wish of voluptuous indolence. By the windows which, darkened by draperies and blinds, cast a dim, but not religious light, I hardly perceived Lady Delphina extended on a sofa, whose rich and vivid crimson contrasted the slender form that reclined on it, and defined its exquisite *contour* more exquisitely. Her not rising, compelled me to approach her: while I made some indistinct apology for the neglect of the preceding night—"It is I who should apologize," said she, fixing her dark swimming eyes on me, "for the trouble I have given you in coming here; but though the world envies me the pleasure I enjoy in your society, I cannot yet prevail on myself to relinquish it. They tease me so about your visits in South

Audley Street, that I wished—I was compelled to make some sacrifice—I would make any, rather than resign your society; so, with true female selfishness, I sacrificed your ease to my indulgence, and brought you *here*. Here we shall be unobserved—uninterrupted—alone.” She cast down her eyes—I tried to withdraw mine: the emotion I felt, I could assign no reason for. Not only Lady Delphina’s *costume*, her manner, her language had always been those of a *vestal* to me. I said, indistinctly, “I was too much honored by her considering me of such consequence; that the pleasure of her society I enjoyed so rarely—so innocently—I could hardly believe it could be a subject of censure, though it might, it *must* be, a subject of envy.” No human being ever spoke, ever looked more sillily. “You don’t know the malignity of the world—my unfortunate situation—” and she paused—“But I

am speaking to one who does not, who ought not, to feel for me more than common compassion." "You have appeared to me ever, and now, an object of delight, not of compassion." Have I, indeed?—indeed, an object of delight!—it is a dangerous happiness to hear you say so—but repeat it again, and I must forget the danger." "What danger can there be in feeling, in avowing that your taste, your sensibility, your touching manner, something that I feel at this moment, though I cannot express it, must make you an object of delight to all who see, who hear you." "To *all*," said she, in a melancholy tone: "it has been my misfortune that I have been an object of admiration to all, when it was my wish to be loved but by *one*." I faltered out, still adverting to her worthless husband, "the wish was enough to have *formed such a one*." "Was it?" said she, half rising from the sofa; "Ah no, I mis-

understand you, or you *will* misunderstand me: If the wish is enough to make me beloved, why am I not loved at this moment?" "I do not, I cannot understand you; I am ignorant and young, at least among women and the world; I feel your attractions, I respect your sorrows, what can I do more?" "Don't ask *me*—I might give an answer dangerous for us both—no, not for you, you are safe and indifferent, and innocent—you are armed in a celestial panoply. I am a weak, feeble, artless woman; it becomes your sex to be stern and inflexible, and ours to be submissive. I will submit. I must. Yet if I could think that my hard fate would be pitied by you; that you would sometimes think of "one who never told her love," or if she told, supplicated your pardon for your having made her wretched—supplicated it with a broken and contrite heart; an heart that preferred passion to dignity and

peace, and broke, without a murmur, for the preference—if I could think this—my last tears would not be so bitter as these.”

Bathed in tears, she sunk on the sofa; I could have sunk into the earth. I knelt beside her. I told her, my voice trembling with agony, I could not love. “I do not ask your love, I asked only for your pity. You have no pity—go, and leave me.” “I cannot go; I cannot leave you—thus at least.” She started up, with horror in her face. “Sir John’s voice. He is on the stairs. I was mad to forget it. He has a *chere amie* in some part of the house. He will certainly come in. I am undone! I am undone!” Half distracted, I was rushing out. “Have mercy on me,” said she, clinging to me wildly, “let him not see you—only let him not see you. Go into this closet, and if he comes in he will possibly take no notice of me, *as usual*.” I past a few moments of agony in shame and fear,

heightened by the feeling that I had not deserved them.

Of all evils, accidental ones, the ills of ill-luck are the most insupportable. I heard a murmur of voices; in a few moments it ceased. I ventured out; the *boudoir* was empty. I rushed home, cursing La Tour and Sir John, and myself, and every one but Lady Delphina, whom I pitied but could not accuse. As I approached home I saw, at the window, Athanasia, and other female figures, standing to survey a splendid equipage, finished in the first style by Godsall, which had just rolled to the door in all the pomp of modern luxury. My losses the preceding night rushed on my memory. Godsall must be paid immediately. I entered the drawing room, little disposed to be elated by the praises which Lady Castle-Wycomb, and Lady Westhampton, who had called on Athanasia, were bestowing on the taste and magnifi-

cence of her new equipage. " But, Mr. Bethel, you are just in time to terminate a dispute between Athanasia and me, which I am sure you will in my favor. I have been telling her, that in consequence of Lord and Lady Montrevor, and Colonel Montolieu's returning, and Lady Westhampton's marriage, and all those distinguished circumstances, our family will appear, on the birth-day, in the most brilliant manner, and it will be absolutely *outrè* if she is the only absentee, except Ida, who is in the nursery. You could not take a more favorable opportunity to be presented. I am to present Lady Westhampton, on her marriage, as the change of titles would render it rather awkward for her mother to perform the office; but she can present you, you know. Our family will almost form a circle in themselves, probably the most brilliant in the drawing room; and it is the only place I ever wish to encounter a family-circle in, for one is reconciled to

the stupidity by the splendor. I see Mr. Bethel thinks just as I do, so we'll save him the trouble of speaking; so come this moment to La Tour's, and look over all her finery; she is the court-milliner, and has an immensity of taste. I'll take you, or you shall take me in your new carriage. That hammer-cloth would be quite superb, if it had the embroidered coronets on the sides."

I had no power to stop Lady Castle-Wycomb, whose language was as rapid as her ideas. In the short interval of her appeal to me I had argued with the bad logic of perverted feeling, that Mrs. Bethel ought to go to the drawing room, if all her family went; that the increasing expences of one winter in London might be retrieved by the economy of a summer in Ireland, &c. &c. As I attended the sisters to their carriage Lady Westhampton reminded me it was her *first night* that winter, and

that she expected to see Mrs. Bethel and me at Soho Square. "I fear I shall renew Lady Castle-Wycomb's horrors of a family-circle by appearing there." "Oh wherever there is *faro*, I am insensible to every thing else. Drive to Sloane Street, and as you are returning stop at my jeweller's. You will of course want jewels, Mrs. Bethel, at least you will want to look at them."

They flew away and I flew up stairs to write to Deloraine for immediate remittances, when Lord Roschamp, who had been looking for me *all through Bond Street*, lounged into the room, and after extending himself on the sofa, started up and dragged me to a sale, extorting my approbation the whole way for his exquisite taste in my new horses, whose choice I had unfortunately committed to him, "for damme now, the thing is this, there is not a groom, or jockey, or rascal of that kind in London, that knows the points of a horse better

than I do." I assented to avoid increasing a violent head-ache by contention. The sale, and the debate on it, which was adjusted in a fashionable coffee-house, detained us till it was too late to dine anywhere but at Lord Roschamp's, where I went with the party "nothing loth." I wished to forget myself, and there was wine enough to make me forget myself and every thing else.

I was restored to perfect recollection by a note which was put into my hands immediately after dinner; the contents were brief. "I am the most unhappy of women, not on my own account, but yours; come to me this moment. I hardly have power to sign my name. Delphina O——." I did not heed the laugh which the direction in a female hand, and the precipitation with which I quitted the room, excited. I reached South-Audley Street in a moment. Lady Delphina was in her dressing room, and

in tears. "What have I done," said she, wringing her hands, "oh, what have I done!" "What *have* you done, tell me, tell me, I beg, only spare me this exclamation; these tears, and I will bear to listen to any thing, to every thing." "I will tell you, but don't terrify me by that pale and breathless wildness; that hollow voice. I too can bear any thing, any thing, but to see you so wretched—so frantic-looking."

She clung round me, but I was insensible of her touch, of her embrace, of every thing but her story. "I will not speak, I will not utter a word till you have drank this wine." I swallowed it; I swallowed another glass. I sunk upon the sofa; she stood before me. "We were seen to-day. Sir John came into the room. You were concealed, but you had left your hat on the sofa, I saw him take it up, and examine it." She took up the hat which had dropt on the floor. "Yes, your name is in it, we *are* undone.

He was here this evening, after he had drank himself into brutal courage. He menaced me with public infamy; I defied him. He menaced you; then I trembled. He saw it, and left me."

I groaned in the bitterness of my heart; I dashed myself on the sofa, and tried, with my handkerchief, to stifle the passion that almost choaked me. Infamy, at the first opening of life, of *married life*, incurred without the guilt, or the solace of passion, and extending its ruin over my principles, my affections, my fortune, my character. I did not love Lady Delphina, but I felt at that moment how I loved Athanasia. I felt that the intelligence would perhaps break her heart. I felt it had stabbed mine to its inmost recesses of honor and affection. I felt all the shame of youth, and all the abandonment of the stranger to life and to vice. I felt all the guilt of the man, and all the anguish of the husband.

My despair terrified Lady Delphina; she dried her own tears. "There is one hope, but one hope for us. He is the most mean, the most sordid wretch; he has no principle of resentment or revenge." "If he has," said I, starting up, "I am ready to vindicate myself either to his justice or his vengeance. I will meet him to-night——this moment. I will write to tell him so. All that man can do to justify himself to man, I will do. I will stake my honor, if he will. If he will, I will stake my existence to prove my innocence. *You* know it; you know my innocence." "I know it; I know my own; but what will that avail. No declarations will satisfy him, and he dreads danger too much to seek satisfaction at the hazard of your life or his own. It is not Moloch, but Mammon he worships. I believe—I am convinced he might be *bribed* to silence." "Oh, then let me bribe him. He shall have all, and more than I can afford, let

him but spare my youth and my name. It was not to run this course of infamy I came to England."

Tears of hot and bitter agony ran over my cheeks while I thought of the wife, whose peace my apostacy would destroy, and of the child whom it would impoverish before it saw the light. "Can you, indeed; can you, without inconvenience, produce a sum that would satisfy him, before delay provokes him to augment his extortions." "I have but four hundred guineas in the world. He shall have them to-night." "And an hundred more from me. I can bear any *distress* but yours. Five hundred guineas would, I am convinced, bribe him to conceal a murder."

Her magnanimity, her disinterested and animated kindness melted me. I implored her to let me write to Ireland, to apply in any other direction. I had no doubt of procuring the money. I would feel

no distress in parting with it. She smiled with melancholy dignity. "What is your peace, your honor, to an hundred guineas." "A world, in purchase for a *friend*, is gain." "I must lose no time in getting the money. I shall bring it back to you in a moment. Do you conduct the whole business silently, and secretly, and safely. I shall not be a moment going home and returning." I kissed the hand she held out to me as I rushed from the room, and thought her eyes reproached me for parting so coldly.

I returned, after depositing the money with her. I asked the servants vacantly for Mrs. B. "My lady is at Lady Westhampton's, Sir—she went about an hour ago—at eleven o'clock." A thought rushed upon me, with the recollection of the engagement. I composed my dishevelled hair and dress, and throwing myself into a carriage, drove to Lady Westhampton's. The glare of the rooms, and the tumult of the company, stimulated my harassed

senses to something like recollection. In the principal room nothing was to be heard but the jargon of the faro-table, diversified only by the clamorous success of Lady Castle-Wycomb, who transferred rouleau after rouleau, from her dear unlucky friend *the Rees* to herself; and the gay wit of Lady Montrevor, whom neither success nor ill luck ever interrupted in the display of that nonchalance to which it was her triumph to bend an agonized mind.

I did not join the groupe. With the provisional reserve of a determined gambler, I determined only to hazard, with an hope of success, and to play only a game I understood. As I lounged through the rooms with a face that (as I caught a glimpse) seemed to hold little alliance with the carelessness of my attitude, I met Bellamy, whom a discovery of my propensity to high play, had drawn more frequently to the *family parties*. We sat down—supper was an-

nounced—we continued to play, fresh candles were brought—the company separated---we continued to play---pushing away the refreshments that were offered to us, and deprecating all intrusion.—Athanasia, who refused to go home without me, threw herself on a sofa, in an adjoining room; and, after waiting nearly an hour, fainted, from fatigue, and perhaps anxiety and alarm. Belamy's politeness or humanity would not suffer him to protract the game any longer. I rose a winner of two thousand five hundred guineas. Lady Westhampton, who had sat with Athanasia, from compassion or curiosity, congratulated my success and her own, in having the eclat of her entertainments established by the report of such a sum being lost at them.

I past a night of restless agony—degraded in my own eyes, and loathing myself, I execrated gaming, as the vilest of vices, and myself as the vilest of gamesters. I thought of the

distress of Bellamy, and of the dereliction of my own feelings. 'It was not for *this*'——a thousand times I began to say to myself, and left the sentence unfinished. I was only reconciled to myself by the most solemn resolutions to extricate myself from the embarrassments in which I was plunged—bribe my persecutors to silence, by the local application of the money I had won; and then bribe my own feelings by its restitution, when I had retrieved my present derangement. My heart clung to the images of domestic peace and love. I thought of retiring with Athanasia, soft, and lovely, and innocent, as she yet was, from the convulsive and delirious struggles of dissipation; and forgetting, in the softness of solitude, the passions that had fevered me to madness, during my winter in Dublin and my winter in London.

I entered her dressing-room, (where we breakfasted) with a flushed face and aching head. I made some apologies

for the fatigue—the distress of the preceding night. “I was only terrified by the *terrible* solicitude you appeared to shew. You know, my love, I never presumed to dictate to your amusements, but had I the two thousand five hundred guineas, I would have given them to banish the gloom that was settled on your countenance, last night, to have brought back one of the smiles that you left in Ireland.”—“If I left my smiles there, my heart accompanied you.”—“Did it,” said she, catching and kissing the hand that was extended to her. “You should not say those soft, fond things to me too often, you see how foolish they make me.”—“They make you bewitching, lovely. By heaven, I love you more than language can tell—your softness, your timidity, your fond and feminine nature has wound itself into mine, by a thousand delicate fibres. How happy I would be—how happy I *will* be, if my love banishes this reserve—this

—I know not what to call it, that veils her from me and herself, and gives herself to speak the language of love, as well as to feel its meaning. Do you love me, Athanasia?" She had half risen, I folded my arms round her, her head sunk gently on my shoulder. "You will never know *how well*—till when—till till I am dead." I attempted to reason or to trifle away a dejection which I believed was only the consequence of her situation. "No," said she, in a voice whose firmness resembled that of her mother--- "No—no power can deceive me, I shall live but a few months longer; but while I live, (suddenly changing her manner) I'll reconcile you to my departure—I'll make you wish for it by my extravagance. Your two thousand five hundred guineas must be transmuted by fashionable alchemy, into hoops and trimmings, and diamonds, and birth-day finery, in a few hours; so give them to me, and give me a kiss,

which *entre nous* I would rather have than all the rest, if we *were out of the circle*.”—“ My love, I have not paid for your new carriage and horses yet.”—“ Oh, give them the four hundred guineas you have in your secretaire, and that will pacify them, till after the birthday.”—“ I have not the four hundred guineas to give them.”—“ No ! Where are they ?”—“ Upon my soul I don’t know.”

I rose and turned from the table with unrestrained vexation. “ Gone, I believe—Why do you ever ask a gambler how or where money goes ?”—“ Why do I ask the most generous, the most indulgent of men, how he pleases to dispose of his money !” said she, rising, and following me, and winding her milky arms about me. I was touched to the soul; her kindness, her confidence, like a fine instrument, cut more keenly and deeply than the *bluntest* reproaches. I returned her caresses with vehemence. I

told her the two thousand guineas were her's—all I had was her's, and an heart whose worthlessness almost made me weep, while I told her, all was her's. "Here's grandeur coming to interrupt happiness, as it always does," said she, pointing to an enormous hoop that was introduced into the room, as she spoke, and spread by two assistants on an arm-chair. I gave the money to her, all but five hundred guineas, which I purposed to give the coach-maker: there was yet a debt unpaid, whose recollection filled me with anguish and shame: the one hundred guineas which I owed to Lady Delphina Orberry---to my heart---to my honor, but one resource remained. I hurried to Berkeley Square; it was between three and four, and Lord Roschamp's phaeton parading before the windows, announced that the ladies were preparing for their *morning lounge*. The folding doors were open, and as I sprung

up the stairs, I saw Lady Castle-Wycomb, Lord Roschamp, and some other fashionables, in the drawing-room ; her ladyship was declaring she was actually broke, by her ill success at faro, the preceding night, (the luck had turned so horribly against her, and then bid Lord Roschamp not forget to make her call at ---'s, for the diamond tiara) as she was adjusting her veil at the glass. Lady M. was not in the drawing-room---the group had not seen me---I passed on to her dressing-room---Bennet was arranging a superb vase of gold fish on a stand ; and her ladyship, attired for an excursion, was just dismissing the person from whom she had bought them. " Mr. Bethel, admire my gold fish ; or, at least, admire the price I have given for them. Pretty creatures---I'll discard all other favorites from henceforth, and love nothing but you---and myself : neither fashion nor caprice shall ever banish you from my boudoir---even *Mercury* itself may be *fired by gold*."

She perceived I wished to speak to her, for my eyes were directed---not to the gold fish, but to her. Bennet, I believe you have touched a torpedo, instead of a gold fish---how can you be so long arranging that vase?" Bennet, after vindicating herself from tediousness, in a speech twice as long as the period of the offence, disappeared. "Can you let me have an hundred guineas immediately?"---"With pleasure---I have had an immense run of luck lately." She checked herself as if her delicacy forbid her to advert to mine. She took a note for the amount from her secretaire; as she handed it to me, she threw up her veil, and fixed her eyes on me. I had never seen such an expression in them but *once before*. I actually started. "I know the meaning of all this---it is something relating to Lady Delphina---she is directly or indirectly the cause of *this*."---"My own

folly, my own culpable, idiot-folly, has been the cause of it." "I would inquire deeper---I would probe you to the quick, but for *this*," as she gave me the note, "the creditor is not allowed to employ torture, by the laws of England."-- "Don't torture me by your goodness---your undeserved goodness. In my present state of feeling, that is the *peine forte et dure* to me." As I spoke, I vacantly traced some characters on the back of a note that lay on the table, with the pen she had just endorsed the note with. "We will not put you to the trouble of oral confession," said she, looking over me. "Your pen, I see, can 'the lover's wish, without the blush, impart.'" My eye followed her's---it was not without "the blush" that I perceived I had written the word "Delphina." I threw the note into the fire. "What would I give that her ladyship could see you---but, seriously, don't be

angry with yourself, or the pen, which I see you are about to throw into the fire, it is not the *first* time a *goose* has *saved the state*, you know."---" You distract me by your badinage. I had rather have advice than an hundred---than a thousand guineas, this moment."---" If you *want* advice, delay not a moment, from diffidence or indolence, or any *other want* of *reason* to take it."---" I have no friend---no director. Hammond and his wife quitted England a week before I arrived in it. His father's death brought him to Ireland."---" Lord Roschamp is waiting in his phaeton for your ladyship," said Bennet, half-entering. " I'll wait on his lordship in a moment : you see I have but a moment to say to you---shun Lady Delphina ; disengage yourself from her at any price that you or *I* can afford. Don't, like the *Sicilian diver*, lose yourself for ever, by plunging into the gulph after *your gold*."

I accompanied her down—"You go in Lord Roschamp's phaeton."—"Yes, I go on with his lordship, and the rest, for a short time—a very short time longer. I have written to Mr. Corbett—I *will leave* London---I *will leave* every thing, to *find* myself, and *happiness*---if *I can*. Tell no one. Wait till after the birth-day, and you will wonder; and wonder you know is *involuntary praise*." The word praise seemed to operate by instinctive association on her ideas, and she gave her hand to Lord Roschamp, and sprung into the phaeton, with the step of Juno, when she ascended her car, after borrowing the cestus.

I lingered in Berkeley Square, debating the *safety* of presenting the one hundred guineas in person. I recollected that it might perhaps miscarry, if committed to an envelope; I recollected the coldness with which her parting look had reproached me; I determined

to leave her, at least, with tenderness and respect: she had deserved tenderness and respect at least from me. I went to South Audley Street, and passed the day in contending with the tender magnanimity of Lady Delphina; who, when she found herself vanquished in argument, and compelled to accept the one hundred guineas, flew to her harp, and lapt me in elysium, by sounds that brought with them oblivion of all pain. When I recovered my recollection, I rose to retire. "You must not go away now," said Lady Delphina, "the streets are still full of carriages going to dinner-parties; at least, stay till you will no longer be observed: the dangerous---dangerous indulgence of your presence, I would purchase at the expence of any danger but your's." There was something so flattering in this secresy---something so confidential in this repose of her fame and happiness in mine, that I

could not resist her request. The thought of Athanasia, pale, dejected, deserted, came to my mind, bringing so much pain, that I tried to banish it.

I dined with Lady Delphina: she had a thousand expedients to divest solitude of depression; the most impassioned works of poesy and love, were heaped on the gilded book-shelves; her harp was always tuned, and her port-folio, filled with animated and popular sketches, was always in sight. A volume of Hayley's metrical plays lay on the sofa, beside Lady Delphina; she took it up, and repeated the first lines of *the Tragedy*—"Let ardent friendship be the bond between us; but, oh, subdue this inauspicious love, and chase it from thy breast."

I will not repeat the pause which followed this sentence, or the conversation which followed the pause. I left Lady Delphina in no error, which the representation of strong and simple feeling could re-

move. I told her of my domestic habits—of my wish for domestic happiness ; I told her of the habits, or impulses rather, by which she saw me urged—being merely the parasite plants, whose clinging was hostile to the native growth of my heart. I told her of my lovely, innocent wife, of the exquisite and vernal wreaths of fancy and feeling, that she had scattered in my path, and hung round my heart. I told her of her talents, which only required developement, to be flattered into perfection ; of her situation, which opened the sources of a new gush of hope and pleasure to my feelings. She did not complain—she did not remonstrate—she knew her strength, she *only wept* ; and, to a woman's tears what can be replied ? She asked me had I never loved ? I told her I had known all the wild and wayward, and exquisite wanderings of that unspeakable feeling ; that I hoped now to know its balm—its com-

fort—its soothing and domestic softness; that the storm that had flashed a fitful and perilous brightness on my heart, had passed by, and the still and fertilizing shower that followed, fell like dew upon it, softening its soil, and healing its scars. She asked me had I no mercy for those who felt as I did?---then she told me she desired no mercy. Still she wept, and only wept.

I left her in agony; yet I left her. Athanasia had, as usual, when alone, sent for Madame, to dine with her; the evening had been exhausted in novel reading, or novel conversation: her sickly struggle to smile, when I entered, depressed me more than the dejection it attempted to hide. I was weary and dispirited, was it a wonder I ran to the first engagement I recollected, in such a state of feeling; and that in such a state of feeling, I was too careless of any thing but the forgetfulness I sought; and that from that, not even

immense losses awoke me? The morning roused me to such misery, that, unable to bear Athanasia's innocent and distracting smiles, I again rushed to Lady Delphina's, and again was soothed by her softness, and animated by her endless and exquisite resources.

The day I passed in indolent and voluptuous melancholy, (in sighings over better things neglected, and the habit and power of evil ones increasing) was a proud and important one to England. Col. Montolieu arrived, with the official dispatches, confirming the success of the expedition, and displaying the details in which his own courage and capacity were so eminently distinguished. I tore myself from South Audley Street, about ten: Lady Delphina, who was invited to Berkeley Square, suggested the propriety of our not entering together; and I drove in her chariot round the square, before I followed, or attempted to follow her,

through the crowded hall and corridor of Lord C. W.'s. Even there, the crowd and the tumult were such, as almost to obstruct the entrance; and the number of strangers who were admitted to see a grand transparency, on the staircase window, respecting the action in which Colonel Montolieu had distinguished himself, completely filled the space to the drawing-room doors. Colonel Montolieu, who had been at St. James's, in the morning, and received in the most distinguished manner, by their Majesties, had returned to dine at Berkley Square, where the whole world of fashion were assembled to greet his appearance---it was fashionable to applaud brilliant actions; and the triflers of the day, unable to understand or appreciate the importance of the detail they importuned for, hung round the fashionable hero, with acclamation and wonder. In the principal room, the circle formed round

him, defied all attempts to penetrate. His words, his looks, his whispers were conveyed by instant gestures, from those who were nearest him, to those for whom not the most painful posture of attention could procure a glimpse of his figure. Lady Montrevor, hanging on the arm of her darling son, seemed to have "forgot herself to rapture:" her loud and animated praise frequently interrupting his narrative; and her wit and her beauty, elevated by pride and joy, almost to "excess of light:"---"I hang upon your *arm*, George, like smiling *victory*." Those who could hear her, repeated all she said; and those who could not, at least comforted themselves by repeating the magnificence of her *appropriate* dress, of *sea-green* crape, draped with bunches of silver-weed and water-lilies: her hair arranged under a naval coronet of emeralds, and the comb from which her long and mermaid-ringlets floated on.

her white bosom, rising into a sparkling *shell* of diamonds.

I saw all this splendor, with the indifference of one whose sight was "dazzled and spent," with perpetual glare; but not with indifference did I see the hero of the day, and reflect, that I was wasting in thralldom to a woman, and to my senses, the powers that might have raised me to an eminence like his own, that eminent night. — I wished I had been permitted to enter, as I proposed, a private soldier into his regiment, and take the chance of life or death. I wished I had never been recalled to enervating wealth, and inglorious indulgence. My temper was embittered by self-contempt and dissatisfaction. I was impatient of the croud, and of their *foolish face of praise*. I was negligent---I was almost harsh to my companion, but it was in vain: from the moment I entered, Lady Delphina had fastened on me, and nothing could

release me from my vassalage. She had the happy art of attaining her object, by appearing to have attained it. The croud had compelled her to take my arm for protection, and she led me through with the most merciless display of my complete subjection ; and such was her gentleness, that, when I struggled in vain to disengage myself from her, it only made me reproach my own brutality ; and such was her address, in laughing at the caprice of fortune, or of accident, being allowed to elevate a man into a demi-god, and the folly of the fashionables, who praised without the power or the sentiment of admiration, that I was almost reconciled to her, and to myself. She drew me into another room, where the heat was less oppressive---here the naval devices, with which the floor had been chalked, were effaced by the feet of the dancers ; here all around me was levity --- I did *feel it less oppressive*

They had commenced with country-dances, but in compliment to some German officers who had accompanied Colonel Montolieu, and to the Imperial Ambassador, who was present, they were exchanged for waltzs, in which the ladies were instructed by their foreign partners. The first object I saw was Athanasia floating round the room with a striking figure, in the attitude which Werter describes as the most exquisite and dangerous that can be assumed; her dejection, her situation forgot in the intoxication of motion and music. No human being could have conjectured, from our mutual attitudes, and mutual disengagement, that we ever had hearts, or that those hearts had ever felt for each other one emotion. She was in the arms, literally in the arms of a stranger; and a stranger was hanging on mine. "How interesting she looks," said Lady Delphina, whose talent and whose pleasure was praise. I

could not look at her. I cursed the perversions of fashion in silent bitterness of spirit. "Are these changes from dejection to extravagant spirits frequent?"—"I—I believe so—I have not observed."

"No,—true—observation is certainly not your forte." "What do you mean?"

"Nothing, or, as Elvira says, "I like resolution, and I am resolved you shall not know." "Know what?" "What all the world knows. Oh, what am I saying; instead of an Elvira I am playing Marplot." "And you want to make me play the Suspicious Husband!" said I, with a suddenness that startled her and myself. "How unjust, how cruel you are! but I was formed to bend to cruelty and injustice. On the contrary I implied that the changes in Mrs. Bethel's disposition proceeded merely from a nervous cause. I am sure of it, from their frequency. I *myself* could never believe them to arise from any other." "Nor I,

I never could—I never will—never, by Heaven, never.” “ Suppress your voice and your emotions, I entreat. I am very unhappy to have been the cause. But I am not the cause. There must be something more. What is it that disturbs you this evening?” “ I don’t know. I *am* disturbed. I am unhappy. You have mentioned *this* several times. I know not what you mean. I have no wish to know. My feelings are too irritable, too painful to be trifled with.” “ Oh, but I am a trifler, and you must forgive me. I should have remembered, that trifles are to the jealous, confirmations strong.” I was going to assure her seriously of the pain these perpetual allusions gave me, when Lord Roschamp, who had been laughing at the dancers, strolled up to us: “ Damme, Bethel, you are famously up to fashionable life I see; the outset of his winter in London, Lady Delphina, began with his declaring he meant to sit with

Mrs. Bethel all his mornings; and now, unless they meet at some fashionable party, by Heaven they never meet at all, morning or night; and when they do, it is only to display to each other some dashing loungeur with whom they stroll round the rooms, nod to each other, and meet and part *selon au dernier gout*."

I was relieved from this attack by Lord Westhampton's loudly declaring, that it was a shame and a sin for men to be congratulated on not knowing their own natural wives and husbands; that for his part, if Lady Westhampton should take it into *her* head to nod it at him, because they went to a fashionable party, it would be the last she should go to with his consent; as to our meeting that way, like strangers, that is impossible, for we always go together in the same carriage, and I take care that we shall *come home at the same time*." Lord Rosechamp laughed vociferously, and Lord Westhampton

as vociferously argued. I might have been amused by this characteristic dispute, but Bellamy at that moment came up with an invitation to play, which I knew was his only object in being there, and which my late success had left me no power of refusing. I followed him to one of the less frequented rooms. Lady Delphina still hung on my arm. We sat down. "The usual rate," said I, cutting for the deal, "I presume." "Half-crowns, if you please," said Bellamy. The *usual rate* was five guineas a game, and a bet which varied *selon l'occasion*. "Are you serious, Bellamy?" "Perfectly serious; you'll oblige me by playing half-crowns." "I shall certainly oblige you." We played, and he lost a trifle. I comprehended his motive. He believed himself to be in a run of ill-luck, and determined to exhaust it on trifling losses. I was confirmed in my opinion when, on supper being announced, he told me he

would expect me in the same place, but not at the same rate, when it was over. "Montolieu," said he, "is fond of dancing, it will be renewed for him after supper. When he is tired of thrice slaying his slain, for all the fashionables in London, we can then be here unnoticed and undisturbed." I led Lady Delphina from the room. "If you are going to *play after supper*, put me into a chair, or any thing that will take me away from seeing your agitation." On the staircase the croud compelled us to stop. Colonel Montolieu, who was laughing with all the vivacity of a soldier, after peril is over, desired to be introduced to me, and a slight form of recognition took place. At that moment, stung by the sight of Athanasia hanging on the arm of her partner, and conversing with him in French, I hurried on with Lady Delphina. A grove of dowager's plumes concealed me from Montolieu's sight. He thought

I had passed on. I heard him say something to Lord Invermay, who stood next him, about a striking figure. "But what is his character, or has he any character at all?" "He is a young man of distinguished talents, but cursedly dissipated, like all *his countrymen*, always intangled with the women; you see *the Orberry* is hanging on him now, and he'll find it infernally hard to shake her off." "Sir John will instruct him; I know no man who gets rid of all his incumbrances better, *debts, wife, all.*" A loud laugh followed. I hesitated for a moment whether I should turn or not. My feelings were aggravated by Lady Montrevor's passing me at that moment with a look of reproachful indifference, if such an expression can be imagined. She was repelled by the croud. "George, I must learn of you how *to advance*, my courage entirely fails; the command of *this expedition* must be committed to you, or to Mr.

Bethel. Mr. Bethel *loves to expose himself to danger.*" Vexed and goaded, I demanded the reason of this delay, and was told by some panting dowagers, that the servants found some difficulty in removing the crouds who had been admitted to see the illuminations on the staircase, and the transparency which terminated the perspective of lights on the *corridor*, and that some stragglers still insisted on being permitted to see Colonel Montolieu and the company as they descended to the supper-room. At this moment something like an impulse was given to our progress, but as we reached the landing-placé, I observed a figure, who was evidently one of the intruders, stationed in a corner, muffled in a dark coat, and observing the company composedly. I passed him without further observation, but recollecting that Lady Montrevor had disengaged her hand from Lord Roschamp, I turned and offered her mine.

“Attend to *your own steps*, Mr. Bethel.” I passed on, but in the next moment a scream of horror and agony made me turn suddenly, and, rushing back, I saw Lady Montrevor sink on the steps, and the *figure* dart through the croud, and disappear in a moment. All now was confusion and terror. Part of the company collected round Lady Montrevor, part in vain pursued the stranger. The tumult was terrible—the screams of affright from those who had witnessed this strange transaction, and of inquiry from those who had not, and the general struggle of distress and importunity and ignorance rendered Lady Montrevor’s recovery impossible, while she continued exposed to it. I relinquished Lady Delphina’s hand—I rushed through the crowd, and, raising Lady Montrevor in my arms, bore her back to one of the deserted drawing-rooms, which in a moment was again crouded with inquirers.

Water and essences were now applied: she opened her eyes — they were fixed and hollow; the deadly whiteness of her bloodless forehead and neck terribly contrasted the rouge on her cheeks, and the ornaments that glittered on her corse-like figure. “Where am I?” said she, in a hollow voice — “and where is *he*?” She uttered some unintelligible words, and closed her eyes again. The croud again gathered round her, with various conjectures: the German readers declared she must have seen a spectre, and shuddered at their own voices, as they threw their eyes round the spacious room, where the half-extinguished lights burned dimly, and the sudden change of scene and employment produced a forcible change of feeling. The voices appeared to restore her to recollection: she immediately assumed that command over herself, which nothing but the absence of reason could divest her of for a moment;

requested that Bennet might be called to attend her; entreated the company to return to the supper-room, and not think so much of the trivial effects of heat and fatigue and *pleasure*. "After all," said she, "I have a better constitution than the Grecian who *died* of joy the day his son was crowned as a conqueror: you may tell George I only swooned: Madame Recamier and I will divide the glory of entertaining company by retiring to bed." She attempted to rise, as she spoke; her mind was stronger than her frame—she could not even stand—she leaned upon me—I entreated her to retire, and Bennet joined in my intreaties, with a something like a trembling consciousness I had never seen her assume before—she was obliged to yield. I carried her in my arms to her dressing room, and she fainted again while I placed her on the sofa. Bennet insisted on being left alone with her lady, and

“allowed to manage her lady quite alone.” I was retiring, when Athanasia entered, who, among the crowd in the supper-room, had heard indistinctly her mother’s indisposition; and now rushing in, declared her resolution not to quit her, and hung over and soothed and supported her with an officious tenderness, such as none but a female knows how to display, and such as a lovely female becomes a thousand times more lovely from displaying.

The thought of her mystery, her reserve, her coldness to me, was exquisitely painful to my heart at that moment: what would I have given to have felt one of her cool soft hands pressed on my burning forehead at that moment, or to have tasted one of the kisses that she wasted with fond grief on her mother’s lifeless hands.

The remainder of the night doubled the losses of the preceding—I gave my note to Bellamy for a sum I can-

not now bear to tell of, and hurried home to find a letter from Deloraine, assuring me that he could not get another shilling from the tenants; that the lands were set much above their value, &c. &c. I had just flung it into the fire as Athanasia returned from Berkeley Square — “Athanasia, I must have the 2000 guineas I gave you.” She fixed her eyes on me for a moment, and then, without speaking a word, took up one of the branches and went to her dressing-room—I followed her, she opened her secretaire, and took out the bills. “I wish I could tell you, my love, the pleasure it gives me to return them: I take an omen favorable to our happiness from it: may I hope you don’t wish we should go to St. James’s, or remain in London, or plunge ourselves deeper in these involvements fashionable and pecuniary.” I did not speak. “Tell me, my love, is this the price of our departure

—are we to return to Ireland, are we to be happy?” I sighed heavily—“ Could you be happy in Ireland? I thought you detested Ireland.” “ I am at least miserable *here*,” said she, clasping her hands with sudden violence. She threw herself on me—“ Take me from this place if you love me, if you love yourself—here I am not, I never can be happy—take me to your heart, shield me, shelter me, fold me, hide me in it—from myself—from every thing but the thought of you—Oh! I could tell you *every thing* at this moment.” She sobbed with vehemence. I knew the enthusiastic state of her feelings—I believed she had nothing to relate but the confessions of exaggerated feeling—my own were dreadfully irritated—I was not able to *hear every thing at that moment*. I told her to spare herself and me—to seek her mother’s confidence—her affection, her strength of mind will be of equal use to

you. "Oh! I cannot encounter her—her wit oppresses, and her despair terrifies me: I could hear her talk for ever of herself, but I cannot bear to talk to her of myself." I hardly heard the last words: as she spoke she was closing her secretaire, but so slowly that I saw a packet of letters in Deloraine's hand lying among the papers in it. Again she pressed me to apply the money to the payment of my debts, and not incur any new ones by compelling her to appear at St. James's. All my better feelings had yielded in the struggle of vanity:—"You shall go to Court—you shall appear in nothing inferior to your sisters. This is our first and last winter in London; but while it continues, you shall shine a star of the first brilliancy, if not the first magnitude. We shall soon cease to struggle against our circumstances, and our feelings; but in the mean time do not contend with me, I cannot bear

it now—I am harrassed, wretched, spent—do not oppress me with your caresses—do not distract me with your tears.” *She* forbore to oppress or to distract me; but the night was one of unmixed distraction. Every character around me seemed to be rising on the ruins of mine. Athanasia’s softness increased with my feverish irritation and self-reproach; and her dignified resignation with my despicable subjection to reluctant depravity. She soothed, she palliated, she flattered the very vices of my temper and sentiments, assured me the splendor of her appearance should be equal to my expectations, my wishes—“And La Tour can easily wait for her bill till your next remittances from Ireland.”

Determined to lose nothing of the grace of a favor, she gave orders while at breakfast, in my hearing, for her dress-makers, milliners, &c. to attend her immediately; yet so painful was the mild

struggle of her feelings, that unable to bear my own, I hurried to Berkeley Square, the moment breakfast was over. None of the family were yet visible—I wished to see only one. From Bennet, whom I met on the staircase, I learned that her Lady had passed a dreadful night, and was very ill; but rising to dress, and go to the Queen's drawing-room. “For you know, Mr. Bethel, my Lady never yields to any thing but when there is nobody to see her.”

I hurried to her dressing-room, and sent in a request to see her as soon as she rose. In a few minutes she was in the dressing-room leaning on Bennet, who placed her on a sofa, and immediately began to adjust the dressing-table. “Oh, I have passed a dreadful night!” said Lady Montrevor. “Athanasia, who hung over me like a ministering angel, told me you knew all my terrible story, when I expressed my fears that you had heard

something in my ravings. You *know* all, and will you believe that I saw *that man* last night—him whom I believed dead these twenty years—whom I do, from my soul, believe dead; and come from the dead to me, and *for me!*”—

“Oh, banish these horrid dreams, you were deceived by a resemblance.” She shook her head incredulously.—“I do not expect to be believed; but I know, I feel I am right in the fact, and in its consequences too.----When Cassandra predicts evil only to herself, she may be believed. Oh, no power could shake me as I am shaken this moment, but a power above humanity!” I reasoned with her as well as the distraction of my mind allowed me. I told her of the probability of resemblance, of mistake, of sudden confusion, of any thing but the horrible fancy that had taken possession of her mind. “You balance probabilities like Hume,” said she; “but I am

not like Hume, a sceptic." To turn the current of her thoughts, I spoke of Mr. Corbett. I inquired what had been the language of his answer to her letter?----
 "Your earnestness," said she, with a forced smile, "puts me in mind of the French physician, who wrote on his prescription, 'to be taken immediately, as the patient has but a few hours to live.'— I will try the prescription however—it is the air of Ireland—I will live there, if I am to live any where; and if I am not, I can learn to die there. But in the mean time, I must try to live out the birth-day, for the sake of those who love me, and those who hate me.----I am forced to hide the agony of my mind alike from both on their accounts, or my own."

She rose as she spoke, and moved slowly to the dressing table, and looking at herself in the glass, said with a painful smile, "Bennet, some more rouge before I *attempt* to dress, I need not

look like a corse *yet*." In my solicitude for her, I had almost forgot the purport of my visit. "Here are your one hundred guineas, Lady Montrevor, and one hundred thousand thanks for them."—"One hundred thousand thanks is exorbitant interest;" said she smiling, "so to appease my conscience, you shall keep the principal till——" "I will not, I cannot---these involvements are hateful to me—I cannot bear to owe any thing—even to you!" "Not to Lady Delphina Orberry!" "Oh, no, no---nothing but common politeness, common gratitude." "Take care, if you incur any penalty there, it will certainly be levied 'as near the heart as possible.'----I am troublesome, I fear, and I hope mistaken; but while I remain in this world, I must continue to feel for you, and Athanasia." "You are—you always have been an angel!" "So I have been always told, but I never believed it, till Mr. Corbett.

told me I *was* intended for one. But unless you wish to see 'angels in machines,' you had better make your escape as soon as possible; for I see Bennet is dying to put on my hoop, and I declare, at this moment, I would rather put on Regulus's—though mine is certainly fitter for a general---purple velvet and gold laurels included."

Of the time that passed between this and the eventful birth-day, I have no recollection, but from the wildest vicissitudes of triumph and despair. With the false reasoning of a mind depraved by its infatuation, I determined to try the fortune of gaming---I was plunged in debts, which I had no means of discharging, and impelled to contract more, by the vanity that when I had commenced a course, forbade me to retreat. Play presented itself no longer as a resource of amusement, or of dissipation; but as a means of relief, certain and sud-

den if I succeeded---that I might lose, I did not suffer myself to think. I was "settled, and bound up to a terrible feat." During this frightful interval, I could not bear to glance at my own face—I could not bear to meet the mild anguish of Athanasia's. She saw my determination, she did not dare to remonstrate, but she did not dare to encourage me. She accompanied me to the dreadful orgies in which my nights were wasted, with a countenance which seemed to say, "this must terminate itself, and must terminate soon." I frequented the faro-table, to which the sudden and marvellous importunity of Lady Castle-Wycomb and her sister was not my inducement: it was suggested only as a more obvious source of rapid aggrandizement. The event was what might be expected: in a few days I was on the brink of ruin; and heard Athanasia, in obedience to me, giving orders for her birth-day

splendor, as if I heard the voices of a dream.

The birth-day arrived ; glitter and tumult had no effect on my harrassed senses now, but to disgust them ; but this occasion was marked by a kind of splendid absurdity, such, as though I observed it but little then, made an impression, I find, on my memory. The equipages, and dresses, and paraphernalia of the day were prepared at the distance of some weeks ; but one part of the preparation it was necessary to secure but a few hours before the occasion, and almost impossible to secure within that time. All the fashionables in London were determined to have their heads dressed by one artist ; and this artist, though he dressed the court-heads *a merveille*, could not dress every fashionable head in London, in the few hours that intervened between the time of a fashionable breakfast, and the time for the drawing-room.----Lady Montrevor, and Lady

Castle-Wycomb, by being inmates of the same mansion, had some chance for being *touched* (for he never did more) by the plastic hand of this creator of fashion. And Athanasia went before nine in the morning to Berkley Square, in a chair, that she might, if possible, avail herself of the distinction of his attendance *en passant*. I did not go—I had no ambition to sparkle only as the satellite of the proud Montolieu family; though every one who would claim the most remote relationship, was proud of recognizing it, on the day that Lady Montrevor, radiant with undiminished beauty, and augmented triumph, introduced her fifth married daughter, (three of whom were peeresses) to Majesty; and Lord Montrevor saw every eye fixed on, and heard every tongue ardent in acclamations of his gallant son, from whose chariot the horses were taken, as he returned from St. James's; and he

and his father, stunned with applause and exultation, were drawn by the crowd back to Berkeley Square. I had placed myself in the anti-chamber, merely to avoid the suspicion of an invidious carelessness. I had expected little from the spectacle, but weariness and confusion; I confess I was disappointed, as all would wish to be—The sight was such as completely to abstract me from myself, and my wretchedness. The effect of the perpetual glare of foil, and rouge, and diamonds, was, after some time, rather painful; but when I beheld, and I *did* behold it, the animating spirit of loyalty and affection, with which the nobles of England poured the high tribute of their splendor, and the dignity around the throne of their venerable sovereign---- When I saw them, as the storm darkened, and the sky lowered, displaying the vast resources of their wealth, their spirit, and their attachment; their “proud sub-

mission ;” their dignified dependance—not bating in the hour of peril one jot, even of the external and casual forms of safety and prosperity, and flashing back, on the tinsel trappings of a plébeian usurper, the habitual and hereditary magnificence of a court of native nobility—When I reflected that the splendid crowd I saw, were not like the courtiers of St. Cloud, the ephemeral productions of a political convulsion, whose effect had been to make all that was great contemptible, and all that was *contemptible* great ; a race of beings nursed in vice and vulgarity, all elevated by crimes, or criminal in elevation ; drunk with sudden vicissitude, and trembling with precarious grandeur ; that they were, with a few exceptions, an high-descended, and high-principled people, jealous of honors, which, if they had not acquired, they supported nobly, and strongly attached to a constitution, and country, to

which their attachment was neither venal, nor fugitive; a people who yet loved their king, and worshipped their God; a people who, with many vices, were yet the first on the earth in national virtues; who, amid the convulsions of the world, had stood unshaken; had retained their honor, their independence, their government, and their religion; and now by this public display of their magnificence, and their attachment, proved to their Sovereign, and to their countrymen, the unexhausted resources, and spirit of the English Patricians. When I reflected on this, the spectacle filled me with thoughts that reconciled me to all its tumult, and its levity; that elated me with confidence, with exultation, with pride; but, however gratified my feelings were, my eyes grew weary of the glitter of hoops, and the nodding of plumes.

As I returned home, I observed a mean-looking man pacing up and down be-

fore the door, as if waiting for me; my heart sickened—I felt, at that moment, the agony of a debtor. He approached me, and said, “Mr. Bethel, I presume, I have been waiting for you, Sir. Can I speak to you, for a few minutes, alone?” We entered the drawing-room.—His address, which was that of a man not unused to the courtesies of genteel life, excited my curiosity, and I had no *apprehensions* from his manner. “We are quite alone, Sir, I presume, and you are quite at leisure to hear me.” I bowed. “My business is peculiarly interesting to us both; and, when it is known, you will, probably, think with me.” “Very probably; but in the mean time, may I beg to know your name? It occurs to me, that no business can be very interesting to me at this moment; but, perhaps, you may undeceive me.” “My name, Sir,” said he, rising, with a look of importance, “had, formerly, more consequence

attached to it than at present, but even yet it has not altogether lost all distinction, all consequence. My name, Sir, is Mason."

The name did not excite my recollection in the slightest degree. "Have the goodness, Mr. Mason, to proceed."—"Sir, I am unwilling to proceed without some explanation—some sort of preface, as it were. Gentlemen, I know, *young gentlemen* particularly, are very tenacious of *their feelings*, very jealous of any thing that seems to question *their delicacy*—or their fastidiousness. Now, if they can be prevailed on to examine, to weigh matters a little, they will probably find, that their *attachment* is in general more to names of things, than to things themselves, and that the value of *things* is always permanent, and the value of names fictitious and transitory." I admitted the truth of the preface, in hopes of hearing some consequence deduced

from it. You are a friend Sir, an intimate friend, a very intimate friend of Lord Castle-Wycomb's: the world says you possess his lordship's confidence eminently, and are eminently deserving of it, and of every notice---every distinction in his lordship's power to bestow."---

"Upon my soul, Sir, the world does me a vast deal of honor and injustice. I am allied to Lord Castle-Wycomb, and very often in his society, but I cannot flatter myself with having made the slightest progress in his intimate confidence. I am apt to believe Lord Castle-Wycomb's confidence is not so easily acquired."---

"Nor is it worth acquiring," said the man in a kind of whispered vehemence. "Sir, he deceives you, the whole world, and himself, by a false opinion of a consequence he does not possess. Sir, his consequence is almost extinguished with the present ministry! --- almost entirely extinguished! --- They have re-

tained him in their train, but not in their confidence, or their employment!---he fills his place no longer---he is gradually diminishing in influence, and in intellect too, sir!---his health is destroyed, and they only wait his first indisposition, to hint to him, his dismissal from business, in the civil form of the necessity of taking care of his health."—"Permit me to observe, that I think all this intelligence rather more interesting to Lord Castle-Wycomb than to me."—"Sir, pardon me, my first object was to assure you, to convince you, of Lord Castle-Wycomb's utter insignificance at the present juncture; a conviction, perhaps, hard to produce in a mind like your's—a mind, so constantly, I may say, in contact with his, and seeing his splendor, and hearing his imposing language, and all that."—"Suppose that object gained, Mr. Mason, for expedition sake, and proceed to the next,"—"Ah,

Sir, I doubt it is not gained, from that slighting manner; yet, if you knew who was speaking to you, I believe you would listen with rather more consideration. Sir, I *have been* much in Lord Castle-Wycomb's confidence: I am now quite *on the other side*; and, if his consequence has declined, mine, I assure you, has increased very much, since the exchange."

I now at once recollected the Mason mentioned by Lady Montrevor, in the history of Lord Castle-Wycomb's marriage with her daughter: the recollection did not much augment my cordiality towards him. "Sir," said the man, "it grieves—it shocks me, to see a young man like you, on your very first entrance, I may say, into life, hoodwinked, and led patiently by Lord C. Your fine talents and situation, and all that, made the victims of a bigotted opinion of his influence and power, and good dispositions towards you." I assured him he

had entirely mistaken my principles and feelings, political and private. "Sir, I shall be happy to find I am mistaken; but I must first convince you of your mistake. Sir, I will convince you that Lord Castle-Wycomb is the bitterest enemy you have—the enemy of your principles, your character, your fortunes, that he would reduce you to beggary, to idiotcy if he could, merely that he might render you as a dupe, more subservient; and as a drudge, more laborious. Sir, he is a man who would sacrifice the whole world, to retain the consequence which he feels shaken under him at this moment."—"Your language, Mr. M. is somewhat extraordinary—I have no exaggerated confidence in the regard of Lord Castle-Wycomb, but what motive can he have for such enmity as you ascribe to him."—"Sir, I am not a man to use extraordinary and unsupported language---I come prepared with proofs;

but, Sir, it is reasonable to expect, that when a man runs the risk I do, he should expect something more than mere conviction for his pains : he is entitled, in my opinion, to claim some service in return, some little consideration---not pecuniary, I mean, for that would be mercenary, but something that proves one has not thrown away the pains that have been taken for another."---" When I know the service you are to render me, Mr. M. it will be time to consider what compensation I am to make for it."---" Well, Sir, that is fairly said ; and, now to the proof. May I ask, Sir, without any offence, are you not in the habit of high and frequent play at the houses of Lady Westhampton and Lady Castle-Wycomb?"---" Have the goodness, Sir, to inform me, when and where this catechising is to end."---" No offence, Sir---dear Sir, no offence in the world is intended. Know your friends, Sir ;---and if

you would know your enemies, read this letter---this letter in my hand, Sir; pardon me, Sir, in my hand—I'll hold it as near as you like." The letter was in Lord Castle-Wycomb's hand: it was addressed to his lady! a great part of it was reproach contained in a variety of allusions I did not understand: the latter part *related to me*. It was as follows:

"I am sensible we may both injure each other, by *open* war. I am, therefore for a treaty of alliance on political (that is the best) principles. You have provoked me, and I have not been deficient in retaliation, but these things are *better* forgotten, at least we need not renew them. I know what you insist upon as the guarantee of every treaty, but *I have no money to give you*---of my own, I mean. That wild Irishman, who married your sister, and came to London to be ruined, may be useful to us both;

but he must be tamed first: he is exactly the man I want for Irish affairs, animated and popular, and with some degree of information; but he is exactly the man who would use all those powers *against us*, if we employed them now. He has got his head and his heart too, filled with all the stuff that many young mens' heads and hearts are usually filled with, for the sins of their employers. It would be of use to me to bring forward this bold, dashing, fresh character *in my traces*, but I must break him first---nothing breaks a man so much as pecuniary involvement. His *property* is a greater obstruction to my object, than his *principles*, as I am fond of believing. If I have any knowledge of his character, he is easily dissipated, and easily duped by women. I resign *him to you*; bring him to your parties---to your E. O. tables, and make him *useful there*. Throw Bellamy in his way, they are just fit to

ruin each other. Even if he wins, he will be dissipated---thoroughly, inveterately dissipated; and dissipation is almost as strong a security for *pliancy* of principles, as poverty. I resign him entirely to you, which, remember I would do on no other condition, for it is a pity to ruin so fine a young man, if it was not for our mutual advantage. I resign *him* to you; the villa shall be finished, you shall give the masked ball after the birth-night, if you resign the infernal *poupon* and its furniture—If not—war, open war.” There was a vast deal more. I had read enough: too much, for it was now too late. The whole plan had succeeded. I was ruined. I turned to Mason, and collected breath enough to tell him it was now too late—that I thanked him for his service—but its only use was now to teach me revenge, since it could not teach me safety. He followed me with arguments upon arguments as I strode up and

down the room breathless with agony and shame. I remember nothing of what he said but the object; it was evidently to make me, like himself, the hackneyed agent of the opposite side. "You have ground to stand on, Sir, that will shake the ground under his feet: you can now expose him as a mean plotter with dissipated women to subdue a man of talents and spirits to his object." As he spoke, a wild thought struck me; I turned on him. "How did you obtain possession of that letter?" He started back. "Sir, that is a question you must not ask, at least I must not answer; but be assured it came into my hands with the full consent of Lady Castle-Wycomb." I was rushing to Berkeley Square, when Mason caught me by the arm—"Is this the return you make for the service I have done you, to expose me and yourself only to new derision and further injury. Is this your gratitude?" "What gratitude,

what return do you expect? I know not what you can ask, or mean."

I can hardly bring myself to detail his answer. I will not at least detail his prefaces and preparations. The object was simply this: that I should avail myself of my frequent access to Lord Castle-Wycomb's closet, to possess myself, or rather possess Mr. Mason, of some papers relative to the late election for M—ddl—sex, in which Lord Castle-Wycomb was suspected of having given private documents to some of the constituents, utterly different from his public sentiments, on the choice of the member. It was an unfortunate time for this infamous proposal; the conspiracy against my character had aroused all its pride. Mr. Mason made a very rapid and disorderly retreat, and I hurried to Berkeley Square. My recollection had entirely forsaken me, till I saw it all tumultuous with carriages and chairs, and Lady Castle-Wycomb and Lady West-

hampton alighting from theirs at the same moment. Encumbered by their hoops, I was compelled to offer my assistance to them, and followed them into the drawing room (where the whole party were to re-assemble on their return from court) with a kind of vacant misery of mind, such as follows a sudden and incredible shock of the feelings. I answered the *badinage* of the ladies, who were in high spirits, with levity as loud as their own, yet my heart was almost bursting with the struggle it underwent. More brilliant triflers arrived, intoxicated with the splendor of the day, and I trifled with *them* till Lady Montrevor and Athanasia arrived in my magnificent unpaid-for carriage. I heard Lady Montrevor's voice, as Bellamy, who had arrived at the same moment, handed her to the drawing-room. "Oh, Mr. Bellamy, I am actually dying of pleasure and fatigue, and attar of roses. Never was anything so gracious and so flattering

as my reception. I never beheld anything like the splendor and croud of the circle. Go, and assist Mrs. Bethel, who is sinking under her hoop, or her terrors: I am a veteran you know, and accustomed to this unwieldy armour. I assure you it did prodigious *execution* to-day."

She entered the drawing-room with a flush of triumph and animation, and beauty and pride, that to me, who knew "all was false and hollow, that her spirits were as much worn for the occasion as the *rouge* that lit her features with all the freshness of youth, to me gave a pang of love and despair, such as for a moment made me forget myself *for her*. But her spirits were as much under her command as any part of the preparation of the day. "Well, Mrs. Bethel, you are now initiated in the mysteries of the drawing-room, of which, like all others, the only secret lies in the courage that determines to find it out. Really the spectacle was quite formi-

dable to a novice. Old Clytus may talk as he pleases of *Greeks*, but when "Hoops join hoops, then is the tug of war." When they abolish them at court all the *amusement* of the occasion will disappear. Nothing diverts me so much as an helpless figure, stuck in the center of its own finery, and managing an unmanageable circumference of drapery with *artless* melancholy and pains. Did you see *the Duchess*, Lady Westhampton, treading on her own train, and begging every one else's pardon? And the dowager—." "Oh, spare me," said Athanasia, "I am sure all this *tirade* is aimed against me, and my artless melancholy. I am sure I acquitted myself most shockingly." "Pardon me, my dear, nothing could acquit themselves better than you and your nastwitieme-wreaths: I actually would have praised you before, if I had time to spare from my own praises." "I wish to heaven," said Lady Castle-Wy-

comb, “ we could send our hoops to court, as we send our tickets, to visit for us, and let them stand in our places there.”

“ And some of them would stand much better than their owners, that look like spirits conjured into a magic circle, and obliged to answer certain interrogatories by the *operation of the white or black rod*. Now, Mrs. Bethel, observe I am not alluding to you. Hoops, not wearers, as the political people say—measures, not men, are the objects of my animadversions. You acquitted yourself most charmingly, with a diffidence, a simplicity, *si touchante, si naïve*, that I could see by the princesses charming eyes, they were all delighted with you. Then, in your simplicity, you did *not* mistake the first lord of the bedchamber for Majesty, when I presented your ticket to him, nor did you turn your back on the presence; or commit any of the *etourderies* of a stranger to courts and their ways.

But were not you delighted and amazed? Lady Castle-Wycomb, did you ever see so splendid a circle?—actually I believe one of my feathers is broke—I don't wonder at it—“*dire was the noise of conflict, over head the feathery hiss of nodding plumes in waving volleys flew, and flying vaulted either host with down.*” “The occasion has made you quite a poet, Lady Montrevor!” “Yes, my lord, a poet-laureat. I wish to heaven there was a poet appointed to describe the splendors of a birth day—it would be no very troublesome office; “pure description,” you know, might “hold the place of sense.” It is a melancholy consideration how many spangles will be tarnished, and how many flowers fade, and crape petticoats grow yellow, and foliages grow heaven knows what colour or colours, that might look for *ever green in song*, and glitter in our dreams of past splendor when we are buried in the country, or

in Ireland. Oh, Heavens! here are the croud actually drawing Colonel Montolieu's carriage. Throw up all the sashes, and let us see and be seen."

I would neither see nor be seen. I hurried from the room, followed by Lady C. W. who deserted the spectacle of her brother's triumph, to remind me it was her night, and she expected the pleasure of seeing me in Berkeley Square. I told her, in a voice of false composure, that I should certainly wait on her, it was my firm intention; and hurried away to hide myself from the hateful tumult of the day, and think while but a few hours remained to think or act.

As I traversed the streets, shunning those that echoed with triumph of the Montolieu's, and the tumult of this tumultuous day, my thoughts almost hurried me to distraction. Lord Castle-Wycomb was a man against whom I could exhibit no resentment, that would

not injure myself more than him. He was in power, and an habitual invalid—reproaches would never reach him, and he would not fight. He would shelter himself, under his privileges, from all persecution; and of my accusation, what proof could I bring while the letter remained in Mason's hands? Against his depraved wife what could be said or done? I was injured without a possibility of retaliation, and ruined without an hope of redress: one paragraph of that infernal letter astonished me while I recollected it. It ran thus—"If my sister, Lady Delphina Orberry, would make our alliance a triple one, we should make sure of our object with greater expedition; but a woman who sacrifices so largely to her vanity or her passions, is not a safe instrument to be employed by *us* at least; she has her own designs on him, and if she succeeds, her success

will benefit us; if she fails, we shall at least not be *committed in her failure.*"

This passage seemed to acquit Lady Delphina of joining their conspiracy, but it hinted a deeper one of her own formation. I had not a friend on earth at that moment but Lady Montrevor. Nothing ever interfered with the views of her clear and powerful mind, but the fatal passion whose influence had only extended to herself. She had no failings of understanding or feeling to others.—I determined to consult her, and abide implicitly by her advice. My heart was wrung to its inmost nerves! For myself, I felt at that moment the awakened pride of my character:—my consciousness of abused powers, my contempt of the infamous management that had been practised on me by the collusion of political fraud and rapacious depravity, could have supported me to struggle through, and to spurn the difficulties in

which they had plunged *me!*—but my wife — my heart bled! How could she abide——how could *I see her* abide the pelting of the storm that darkened round us? I felt, with intolerable compunction, that the enmity of the whole world could not have injured us, had not *my* folly, *my* vanity, *my* infatuation conspired to spread and to close the snares of iniquity! My feelings *were intolerable!*—it was a relief to escape from them by hurrying to Berkley Square.

I was there at an early hour. The party who were to make their appearance on their return from the drawing-room, and who principally consisted of those who had gone there, was of course unusually splendid, and unusually late.--- Lady Castle-Wycomb's vanity had fixed on a night when the magnificence of the court-dresses would heighten the *eclat* of her entertainment; and had requested all with whom she was intimate not to

take the trouble of throwing off their hoops and ornaments, as they would meet very few, and all would be in the same costume with them. The servants were only lighting the tripods on the stairs. "Are any of the ladies returned from St. James's?" "No, Sir; they are not expected to return this hour." "Has Lady Montrevor returned?" "No, Sir."

I turned away, weary and disappointed. The night was clear and beautiful, the cold pure air refreshed my burning eyes and forehead. I dismissed the carriage, and determined to walk round the square till some one arrived: in a few minutes I saw a chariot stop at Lord Castle-Wycomb's; and a glittering figure, in a court-dress, descend from it. By the distant light of the flambeaux, I thought the figure had some resemblance to Lady Montrevor's. I was in that state of mind which believes the first object it sees to be that it wishes to see. I followed the

lady to the drawing-room, and there discovered Lady Delphina Orberry, who not at all flattered by her reception at Court, from a Queen, whose purity of manners adds dignity to her dignified station, had retreated as soon as possible to Berkley Square, where she was to pass the night. “ Oh, Mr. Bethel, I am rejoiced to see you—and to see you alone. The hope of it was all that impelled me to this encounter. I have no longer spirit for a croud—and I wish to spare you the pain of deserting me in the midst of one as you did the other night.—Don’t be afraid” (she saw me about to speak) “ I have no intention, no motive to reproach you: you are happy in the bosom of domestic felicity and honor. I could not disturb you—I have no wish to do it. It will not at least offend you that I wish for your happiness;—I know I have no power to contribute to it by more than wishes.” “ I have no spirits

to encounter your satire, Lady Delphina; and no heart to thank, to reward your kindness—if you are kind.” “Oh, you do yourself injustice—you knew how to reward my kindness well,—my weakness, my wretchedness I would say—when you exposed it to the bitterest enemy I have on earth—when you told Lady Montrevor of your triumph over the weak, fond fool—weak and foolish that I was—and fond, too fond.”

She was in tears:—I vindicated myself by the most solemn and vehement asseverations; I assured her that Lady Montrevor had her intelligence from herself as soon——I was proceeding—“Oh, Heavens! how cruel men can be. How else came her signature, her hateful name, on the note you gave me? Here it is—take it back: aye, you may read, you may kiss the name if you will—I know how you love it—M. D. J. Montrevor—it is as plain as my shame---my folly!

but take it back, Sir. Sir John, provoked by the discovery of my weakness, has refused it, has refused any *compromise for the prosecution*. I would have consulted ---I would have advised---but your cold, contemptuous, cruel manner has deprived me of all feeling, but for myself."

It is a mockery to *talk* of feelings at some horrible moments. In my agony I fell at her feet---I besought, I implored* for relief, for refuge----I promised any concession, any sacrifice, any thing, and every thing in the power of man, or beyond it---I threw myself on her resources, on her mercy, utterly and unreservedly. "Oh spare me," said she, "the sight of your distraction, for it makes me incapable of thought. You know not what an heart you have abused, what a spirit has been sacrificed to your love, and your hatred. I am not deficient in resources, but the horrors of this moment have only left me one to suggest. To one who

loves as I do, in spite of contempt and cruelty, nothing can be terrible ; oh that you felt as I did, willing to leave this horrid country, and go somewhere where solitude would be soothed by love, and love would be unbroken by shame or persecution of cruel, worldly minds."--- I was silent, for I was stunned. " Oh come with me, and we shall be happy," said she, rising, and hanging on my shoulder, " I have enough for us in some delightful retreat in a safe and delightful country, where no cruel, formal minds shall dictate to us our modes of happiness---where if the world despises us, we shall despise the world with so much more reason, so much more conviction of its worthlessness."

She still hung on me; but she saw my eyes fixed on a point—she saw the big, cold drops on my forehead—she heard me murmur in agony—" Great God, is it come to this !"—" Oh, I see my pro-

posal, and myself, are horrible to you; but they cannot be more horrible than this despair is to me. Be calm, be composed, and I will say no more—not another word—let the world, the infamous unfeeling world, and my *unfeeling infamous husband act as they will.*” “And, is there no other resource—no other refuge? Is there no hope—no redemption for me—for Athanasia? ——— Oh, G—d! — Oh, God!” “Hush!---Are you a man?---Have you reason? *There is: Money---*money will purchase any thing; it will bribe even my horrid tyrant to silence; all things are possible, if you have money, I will undertake---I will negotiate.”---“I have nothing, absolutely nothing; I am plunged in debts, and have not the means of extricating myself, if I mortgaged every acre I am worth. The disposal of a large estate takes too much time for my persecutors to wait. I could raise money, by ruining my unborn

child; but I will first consume in a dungeon---let him coin my blood for drachmas: I have nothing else to give."

I wept with the weak agony of a child. "This is dreadful! and you suffer thus, and you persist and rejoice in suffering thus, for one who is melting in your arms, with the dreams of another love, and you spurn one who---". "What is it you mean?---What would you have me think?" "That you are the most insensible of mankind, in every thing—that you either are cursed, or blessed with a total blindness, in respect to your wife; or that by a mutual happy act of amnesty, you both agree to forget---she, that she has too beautiful a mother; or you, that you have too zealous a friend." "I hear your words, and hardly hear them; they have no meaning in my ears. I am stunned and giddy; if you have any thing to propose, do it quickly, while I am able to comprehend you; for my

brain---my eyes, seem bursting out in flames." "Try your chance----your chance this one night----only this one night; if Fortune has not favored you of late, she will relent to-night. I know of nothing that can extricate us from our present misery, but money; double your rates, and triple, and quadruple your bets. Bellamy, or Lord Invermay, or Lord Roschamp, will play with you for any thing. This is a night of intoxication and joy; all may be well in a few hours, and we may laugh at persecution.---Hush! Hark! they are coming—I hear carriages at the door—they must not see you with this dishevelled hair, and flushed cheek. It will kill your affectionate wife, or mother-in-law, I would say, to see you; run down the back stairs, wait till they have come up, and then enter through the hall. I will stand here, and spread my hoop before the door."

There was but a moment left for taking her advice.---The horrors of that night never will quit my memory, if I lived a thousand years. I quitted Berkeley Square, at five in the morning, a beggar.---I leaned my burning head on Athanasia's neck, when I got into the carriage; she did not shed a tear; she did not utter a reproach. When she thought my despair had exhausted itself, she said, in a voice of soft, youthful, tender firmness—"When my love has repressed the keenness of his too exquisite feelings, he will, perhaps, pronounce this the happiest period of his life; we have nothing left to love or cherish, but each other; and if the trappings of which we are divested, were an obstruction to the ease and simplicity of love, how shall we regret their removal!"

Her reproaches would have been more tolerable---I threw myself on the bed in frantic, unmanly grief. She had no

strength to contend with me ; she was apparently intent on something that was passing in her own mind. As I lay extended on the bed, stifling my groans, I saw her through the dressing-room door, go to her secretaire, take out a number of letters, which she tore and burned, and then write, apparently a short note, with many pauses of thought. When she had finished, she came to me again, and again hung over me. I was insensible to reason, I would have been irritated by the clamour of consolation ; but the touch of her cold, soft cheek, on my burning hands, and the dew of her silent tears, and the gentle unfelt winding of her fairy arms within mine, were like balm to my body and mind ; but these moments of undeserved softness and consolation, could not continue long, I was compelled to rise, and look my ruin in my face. The morning presented me with bills to the amount of

thousands; and recollections of debts for more than thousands. I looked on them with a fixed and empty eye; I heard Athanasia's voice; I started up and traversed the room in agony. Had I never known her, or her worth, it had been a mercy to me. I wished to banish all human feelings from my heart; I wished to be as wild as my fortune at that moment, to have no hope, or resource, or tie---Nothing to hold me to life or reason; and to know her only amid misery and ruin, to her mild and steady virtues, beaming out on the darkness that gathered round me, and showing its extent, and its blackness—to know that she loved me when I was no longer worthy to be loved; that *I* loved *her*, when I could no longer *maintain* her!!! How could my reason survive that moment; it could not survive much longer. I had no resource, but the disposal of my property, the impoverishment, the

alienation of my child. I had but this, this only to interpose between myself and a prison; between *Athanasia* and a prison.

At that moment, I had no power to propose either alternative, I determined to adopt neither, without the consent of my injured wife; but the application for consent, that killing exposure of our ruined state, that full, unfeeling detail of our utter destitution, I dared not, I could not, at that moment, have undertaken for worlds. With the natural compromise of misery, I resolved to defer it, at least, for a few hours, and with the natural vitality of hope, I tried to believe, that in those few hours something might intervene to prevent it.

I could not in those few hours, confine myself to home, to the reproaches of *Athanasia's* soothings, to the woundings of her sight---I rushed out. How shall I disclose the workings of a despairing mind.—I wished when I quitted

the house, that I might never behold her again; that she might be at peace before I returned to tell her she was ruined.— I rushed out—I hurried through the streets, without knowing where I was going; without intending to go any where. The business of the preceding night, it was *necessary* to disclose to Lady Delphina Orberry; — but to her house I dreaded to go, as I would dread to enter the den of scorpions.

It was the latter end of January, a chill and drizzling shower had fallen all day, I was drenched and insensible of it; the only sensation I experienced, was a kind of blind impatience, to escape from all places of concourse. I had almost reached the end of Sloane Street, when a carriage, which I had not noticed, stopt close to the pavement, and a voice called to me. To any voice that called to me, in a tone of feeling, I would have turned at that moment; for I panted for

relief and refuge. I knew not what I was doing till I felt myself seated in a carriage, beside Lady Delphina, my bodily weariness was great, almost as great as my mental emotions. I fell back in the carriage; I felt her applying her handkerchief to my damp, pallid forehead. I felt her cool, soft touch on my cheek; I could not resist; I could not repel the soothing tones in which she spoke; they were like music——melancholy music to my ear.——She brought me to South Audley Street; I passed that day (a dreadful day) with her.

I will not tell of our long, and broken conferences; of the varied and opposite passions that tore my mind; of the address with which she combated my wildest bursts of emotion, and insinuated, at *safe* intervals, the poison of her consolation, of her advice. When I told her, in a voice of agony, I was ruined—

when I repeated it, till like the sorceress in "Thalaba," "my voice was a shapeless yell," she again whispered the proposal, of—Escape from England, from wretchedness, from ruin! When she saw me rushing into frenzy at the hint, she again deprecated my despair, bewailed her own rashness, exhorted me to stay and bear as *I might*, the proud compassion of the Montolieu's, the worldly feeling, and hackneyed *Comedie Larmoyante*, that Lord Montrevor would play; the cold, politic triumph of her brother. "The glittering Lady Montrevor," said she, "will distinguish your fate by a brilliant sentence; or, perhaps, a brilliant tear; and the world will applaud her wit, or her sensibility; no matter which, to her, provided they *applaud*.—And your little sentimental angel of a wife will, for once, be obliged to defraud her *feelings* of a tear to bestow on vulgar distress." "My wife!"—I groaned invo-

luntarily, it was an ill-omened sound for the *effect* it was intended to produce. I gave way to all the vehemence, and all the anguish of my feelings. I cursed myself, and commiserated Athanasia with that bitter and compunctious pity, that could weep blood over the ruins it has caused, and cannot repair.

She wept too—her tears were nothing to me—I felt only my own despair---“ Oh heavens,” said she, or sobbed in a struggling and inward tone, as if absorbed in her own thoughts—“ Oh heavens, was ever man so cruel---he has no heart ---let any power, if the powers of mercy have not all renounced me, look down and judge between us this moment---see how he weeps for her to my face---for *her* who is wasting and cold in his arms with passion for another---before *me*, me who would follow him---what do I say?---who have supplicated to follow him, ruined as he is, through the world.” If I did

not understand this dark language I felt it. I was in that state, to which a new source of misery is even a relief. I demanded an explanation of her words. She would again have involved herself in allusion and mystery; but it was too late, I was too desperate for suspense or circumlocution. I compelled her to a long, distinct, consistent narrative. My blood ran cold, yet I listened till I had heard it all. No suspicions of the narrator's veracity could throw a shadow of relief over my mind; they were circumstances she had no concern in, which she could not fabricate, which she could not have contributed to. When all was told, I asked for *proofs*, in a voice whose firmness startled myself. She paused a moment, but she was soon collected: "Since," said she rising, "I have *committed* myself by this disclosure to one who has no feeling for me, or for himself, if he neglects it, I must not be asked for

proofs in vain; if you have courage for *confirmations strong*, I have told you they are deposited in Mrs. B.'s secretaire; mine and hers were made by the same artist, I *believe* the same key will open them both, *probably*, if you try, you will succeed" (she well knew I must) you know we have high authority for intercepted correspondence."

She gave a small key into my hand as she spoke: I took it vacantly, I gazed on it for a moment, without the slightest consciousness of its use. She saw my eye fixed in a kind of wild stupor, she knew the way to rouse me: "this is the moment," said she, looking at her watch, "this, or never; Mrs. B. is at a party, some ball or concert, I heard her talk of it; you will perhaps have no other opportunity, if you neglect this, and if you think it worth the trial, why neglect it?"

I had not noticed the lateness of the hour. It is a false observation, that to

the miserable time appears universally slow; there is a species of misery to which it appears to acquire an incredible precipitation. I hurried from South-Audley Street; it was near eleven o'clock when I quitted it; it never occurred to me that Athanasia might be at home. When I reached the drawing-room, she was alone, and reading. In the confusion which I felt at her sight, I traced something like the consciousness and the punishment of detected meanness; but I was now in the habit of struggling with my better feelings, yet I could not collect myself to conceal my surprize at seeing her at home. I said something inarticulately about her engagement. "I knew," said she with that gentle firmness, whose language was now like daggers to me, "it was your wish that I should appear abroad just *at this time*, and I therefore *determined* to go; but from *some cause* I felt myself so agitated,

that Doctor D. told me I must not venture into a crowd. He did not know the pleasure he was procuring me; yet I had a presage (said she stretching out her white slender arms to me) that you would not pass this whole night abroad." I could not resist, yet I could not yield to her. I bent to her, but it was with averted head; I dared not let her see my face. Suddenly I turned to her, I clasped her with agony, with violence; I gazed on her with dry, and burning eyes. I held her for a moment, and released her with a pang, which if I ever feel again, it will be surely the presage of dissolution.

She attempted to follow me. "No, my love, not now; your softness is too much for me; I am not well, I am not happy." My voice failed. I wished every thing else might fail me at that bitter moment. "*Now* then," said she, and she clung to me, not with the cloy-

ing and fulsome blandishments that weary instead of soothing, but with the chaste monitory pleadings of conjugal fondness, the "sweet remembrancers" of mutual joy and sorrow.

It was this memorable night that I obtained a just and comparative knowledge of Athanasia's character, that made it appear superior to any I had ever known or imagined. How different was the pure breath that played over my parched, and pallid cheeks, from the feverous sighs of passion exhaled by one whose name and image were at that moment hateful to me; the latter breathing all the voluptuous despair of guilty passion, the former able to "chase all sadness but despair." How different was the bland and balm-dropping lip, that gave such touching effect to its lessons of love, from that which only talked of the indulgence, or the desperation of guilt. I mentally compared Athanasia with all of her sex who

had ever attracted me. Lady Montrevor, by far the most brilliant and fascinating both to the senses and the mind, I felt was formed to be admired; the seductive and infatuating Lady Delphina was formed to be desired, but Athanasia was formed to be loved.

I yielded to her spells of softness with the melancholy pleasure of one who has to travel a long, dark way, yet lingers as he goes to gaze on the fairy lights that cheer while they cheat him by their "blear illusion." I never knew the powers of her mind till this night, they were various, they were exquisite. She told me with a smile, that was not one of her plaintive smiles, that she was determined to try if her harp retained the virtue of charming away the evil spirit; and seating herself at it, began adapting some passages from the "lay of the last minstrel," which she had been reading, to a wild extemporaneous melody which she excelled in in-

venting. From the praises of her music she led me to the praises of the subject. She pointed out the passages of that most beautiful poem she had heard me admire, with a kind of doubtful appeal that almost interested me. I was willing to forget myself. I yielded to her with a melancholy joy that struggled to catch one weak and wintry beam of gladness before the night set in.

Supper made its appearance at a late hour, yet we thought it early; it was the first domestic night I had passed since my marriage. "Well," said Athanasia, as she quitted her harp to approach the table, "if fortune denies us other luxuries, we can, at least, have the feast of music, and the flow of song." The delicacy of this reference to fortune, where she might have accused another agent, I felt in every nerve. I acquired some command of myself—our supper was almost chearful. As she rose, she said, with

a smile, "I pitied poor Julia de Roubigne in her retirement, when her proud father tore away the little wreath with which she had decorated his supper. *My* love is not of *his* mind. He will not tear away the little ornaments of fancy or taste which I have reserved to embellish our table—when—when it is spread in solitude and indigence, like Roubigne's." This was too much: she ought to have been less an angel, in mercy to me. I begged of her to spare me; to spare herself; to reflect that her physician had recommended repose. "And you have exerted yourself very much, too much, to-night, my love." "I *have* exerted myself very much, *not too much*, if I have amused you, (she was retiring; she turned suddenly, and said, with a face glowing with expression) do you know I was piqued to exert myself to prove to you, that when you *retire from the world*, it will be with one not destitute of the re-

sources that make retirement supportable." I caught her in my arms. I forgot every thing at that moment—every object but herself. I banished all that was past. I would not think of what was to come.

The medicines her physician had prescribed to compose her soon produced their effect. To me—to sleep was impossible. My restlessness was even increased by her tranquillity. At this moment the recollection of the key, and of Lady Delphina's narrative, rushed on my mind: for a moment I repelled it. It returned to me with resistless impulse. Something like a confused notion of justice to Athanasia prompted the investigation; something like a desire, a confidence of her vindication, palliated the meanness of a clandestine scrutiny. The words "cold and wasting in your arms with passion for another," rung in my ears. I felt that I must be satisfied. I felt that my mi-

sery would be insupportable if I received conviction of what I could not name to myself; and I felt that suspicion would be almost worse than conviction. I rose. She was still asleep—I went to her dressing room—I applied the key—it opened the secretaire in a moment. My hands recoiled as I touched the papers which I knew were not mine. I forced myself to examine them—there were some fragments of letters in Deloraine's hand: they probably belonged to those I had seen her tear the preceding night. Among them lay a letter recently written, addressed to Deloraine; it was unsealed. I opened it—it was the writing of Athanasia—it was dated the preceding night. During my perusal of the first lines I felt some revoltings at the act I was engaged in, but they were quickly swallowed up by other feelings. I will make no comments on this letter—I will state it exactly as it occurs to my memory.

*To E. Deloraine, Esq. Moglena Castle,
Galway, Ireland.*

“ I MEAN not to assail you with reproaches, for *to you* I owe it, that my eyes are at length opened: the work was gradual, but it is at length completed. Never did woman escape from such ruin; never did woman escape by such means from such ruin. When I look back and reflect that a few months—what do I say—a few *days* back I was a miserable, perverted being, seduced by the jargon of sentiment, and sacrificing my best feelings and affections to a false pernicious principle which I dared not examine, yet thought it a duty not to resist, and trying to assume a wild virtue from the sacrifice. When I recollect myself, and so lately, the pupil of false sentiment, and *all its works*; dying to be the heroine of a mad and wicked tale of a Rousseau, of a Gothe, of a Wolstonecraft; dying to

convert imaginary duties into real, and real into imaginary ones; when I recollect this, how can I be but grateful to the hand that led me to the very brink of the precipice, though its intention was to dash me from it, since it was there that I recovered my reason and my sight? Yes, Sir, you have led me blind and infatuated through many a maze of delusive feeling, and you might, perhaps, have led me on till the power to pause or to retreat was utterly lost to me, had you not, by too precipitate a disclosure of your *own views*, awoke for ever those of your victim. The reign of false feeling is over. Alive, and trembling at my new existence, I review my past and present self, and shudder to think what I might have been, and triumph to think what I may yet be—what I *may* be, for my present feelings want confirmation and exercise. To the whinings of romantic delirium has succeeded a determined discharge of duties,

to which my heart has long prompted me, had I not struggled with its dictates—struggled to mistake them. Lest the smallest suspicion should remain on your mind that I am deceiving myself or you, in this representation of the change of my feelings, I most solemnly assure you I never loved you: I never loved man but *him* whom misfortune has endeared to me; whom I never knew how much I loved, till urged to desert and dishonor him. The wild attachment, which I deceived myself and you in suffering you to believe you had inspired me with, was the unhappy offspring of many unhappy causes—of a neglected mind, an insidious and fatal companion—an artful man—a dangerous course of study—and the wanderings of an untutored mind, too prone to passion and to melancholy; too fond of exalting fantastic sufferings, and believing it ought to be unhappy, because the subjects it loved to read of

were unhappy. Accept my solemn declaration that my heart is my husband's; it ever was—it ever shall be his. I never knew I loved him, till now—but it is not too late. When I compare his heart and character with those of him who would alienate me from him, my own is torn with shame and pride and love. In the agonies of my first conflict, on the discovery of your unworthiness, or my own, I believed I had not long to live. I now wish to have my life protracted, that it may (for I flatter it yet may) be devoted to the happiness of his. Write to me no more, Sir, it is in vain; your miserable agent is dismissed, I will see her no more; I will hear no more from you. I have *banished all my French books*. I have destroyed all your letters. I would request you to destroy those you have received from me, but I would be sorry to be thought to possess interest enough to make a request from you: perhaps it may

humble me, and reform you, that they should be left with you as evidences of a mind retrieved from folly before folly was darkened into guilt. I will spare Mr. Bethel the knowledge of your unworthiness, for I wish to spare him pain. Perhaps my lenity may be erroneous, I trust you will not *prove it so*.

I am, Sir, &c. &c. &c.

ATHANASIA BETHEL.

Such was the letter: I have said before I will make no comments on it. I am as little able to make any comment on the feelings with which I perused it. I had no time for feeling; that gush of delicious emotion which overflows the heart on the renewal of affection, and the vindication of virtue, had hardly visited mine, when I was disturbed by a footstep approaching—I turned round—Athanasia had risen, and stood at the dressing-room door. She saw my employment, and was

bending forward with an expression that can never be described, and never forgotten. I did not move—neither of us spoke. This strange scene continued in silence for more than a moment. She retired without speaking a word. I remained—all the enthusiasm of my joy, a joy that made me for a moment forget all misery, extinguished by a consciousness of meanness, of jealous and officious meanness, that abased me to the dust. It was near an hour before I could drag myself into the next room—she was asleep. My heart sunk within me when I was compelled the next morning to meet her injured, unrebuking eye. She never hinted at the subject, or shewed the least constraint in her manner; but I was now so well acquainted with the strength of her mind, that this did not deceive me with regard either to her knowledge or her feeling on the late subject. We both seemed to talk studiously on indifferent

topics; nor do I ever recollect having talked more, and understood less of what I was saying, than that wayward morning.

To the distraction of my thoughts but one relief presented itself, to consult Lady Montrevor, from whom I now felt as if I was to expect every thing; for there is a weariness in wretchedness, that imposes an artificial debility on the mind, and makes it impatient to devolve its burden on another. As I hurried to Berkeley Square, I formed a resolution to make one desperate effort for the happiness which I seemed hitherto to have trifled so worthlessly away. With my views of Athanasia's exquisite mind and character, my hopes of happiness, however remote, or however undeserved, rose strongly and sanguinely—as sanguine as my first dreams of pleasure. I determined to extricate myself from all pecuniary embarrassments—from London—

from Lady Delphina, at any price; and to fly with Athanasia from the withering atmosphere of vice, as the only chance of safety or of happiness.

People often defeat their own intentions, by the policy which they employ in compassing them. Athanasia and I, concealing our separate intentions of consulting Lady M., *met* in her dressing-room, and counteracted each other's object. It would have been indeed impossible, under any circumstances, to have procured a long audience of Lady Montrevor. Castle-Wycomb house was in a tumult of preparation, that occupied every room. The grand fancy ball, which was to celebrate all the distinguished events that had lately occurred in the Montolieu family, was to take place the following night. All the company were to be in character, but without masks; and all that taste, or fashion, or wealth, could accumulate, was summoned to this bril-

liant festival. The first artists in London were employed to lend all the witchery of light, and drapery, and dramatic picturing, to the decorations. It was the fashionable lounge of the day, to examine the preparations, bestow praise, and hint improvement; and Lady M., to whose taste every thing was submitted, after stimulating her harassed spirits with laudanum, walked through the rooms, a second Aspasia, dispensing the oracles of taste and fashion, and hiding the corrosions of her mind, under applause and admiration. I found her surrounded by a group of fashionables, to whom she was explaining the intended effect of a deception in the perspective of the adjacent room, which was intended to represent the Temple of the Sun, the splendid theatre of Peruvian worship. Colonel Montolieu was laughing, with all the open vivacity of his character, at the fashionable rage for borrowing all the embellish-

ments of our drapery, and apartments, and fêtes, from the recent local scenery of some national victory. "It is very well, hitherto," said he, laughing—"Egypt and South America certainly furnish enough of picturesque objects, but what the devil will you do, if our next successful expedition should be to the Cape of Good Hope, for instance? Will you fill all your rooms with sketches of squab Dutch villas, and Hottentots in natural bronze, capering among them—*Mais coutume est tout.*"—"At least," said Lady M. "if you give us no other decorations, you will take care we shall be supplied with laurels."—"Oh," said she, turning, and observing that Athanasia and I had entered at different times, and apparently with different parties, "quite a fashionable pair, I protest—I believe the only *un*-fashionable pair, at this moment in the room, are Manco Capac and his wife, if we may judge

from their attitude." She continued, fixing the attention of the whole groupe of triflers, on the figures of the great Peruvian legislators, at the extremity of the room, and turning her full, dark eyes on Athanasia and me, with something like mingled fondness and reproach at the same moment.

The group gradually dispersed through the apartments, gazing at novelties, but one straggler remained near us. "My dear Lady Georgina," said Lady M.—"*Can* you think of no colour for the Mantle of Manco Capac but yellow. I know all you would say about his affinity to the sun, &c. &c. &c. But you know all the colours that Ovid gives to the palace of his sun; and why should the South American sun be less brilliant."—"I really do *not* know," said the simple Lady Georgina, stunned, as Lady M. meant she should be, with this tirade, "but I am sure your ladyship has the best taste

in the world.”—“ Oh, my dear, don’t talk of taste, every one knows that your taste is equal to your understanding--- *almost* ; and you will do me the greatest favor in the world, by just glancing at the figure again ; and the light it is placed in, and giving me your opinion, which I assure you will be decisive, as *it ought* to be.”

Lady Georgina, delighted with her commission, tripped away. Lady M. walked rapidly into a small cabinet : I followed her---her back was turned to me, but by the sudden motion of her arms, I could perceive she was clasping them on her breast, with the strongest expression of agony and devotion. I approached her---she did not turn.---“ What an employment,” said she, apparently to herself, “ for a dying woman !” I repeated the word “ dying,” with astonishment. I could not follow such rapid transitions of mind as this most unhappy

woman was accustomed to undergo, in the struggle between her feelings and her habits. "Yes, I know, I feel I have not long to live: I cannot be deceived in my present presages---the laws of the invisible world are not repealed for mockery."---"Good heaven! what can you mean by this terrible language?"---"I mean," said she, in an hollow but calm voice, "that I am dying, certainly dying: scepticism cannot resist the warning that has been sent to me---whether in wrath or mercy, I know---oh, I know not!" She threw up her eyes to heaven with an expression of appealing agony, that terrified and exalted me. "Twice," she continued, turning to me, "twice since have I seen the figure of that man who has been dead these twenty years---laugh, if you will, but I must tremble, till I know the truth; and then, perhaps, others will tremble for me---twice," said she, sitting down, and suppressing her

voice, "I have seen him, and in the same place, and in the same form: I knew him well: he stood firmly on the ground ---he gazed steadily on me."

She put her hand before her eyes, as if to banish the horrible vision. I urged the distracted state of her nerves---I urged the effects of laudanum, and the dreadful quantities she was accustomed to take. She shook her head incredulously. "No, no---I know the state of my nerves---I know the state of my mind. I have been accustomed to a kind of artificial and delirious strength, which has rather disposed me to ridicule these things, than to yield ridiculously to them; but *you* are not stupefied with laudanum. I adjure you to go to Berner's Street"—(here she gave me a most particular description of the place, and the person she believed she had seen) "if you see any thing like that form, which I have certainly seen——but no, it

is impossible—he cannot be alive; and, if he were, of what use could it be to me?—no human being can now be of any use to me, nor I to them, except ‘to point a moral, or——no, not *adorn* a tale.’ Oh, that Mr. Corbett were near me now: he might do something; but him I hardly reckon human. Oh, that I were the meanest of his flock, that sat at his feet, and listened to him humbly, and lived and died in the bliss of ignorance, instead of the glittering, miserable Lady Montrevor. All my powers only increase my self-condemnation.—What powers have I possessed, and what a life have I lived? I am no Catholic—I cannot ‘dying, put on the weeds of Dominick, or in Franciscan think to pass disguised’—the disguise will not even pass with myself.” She threw her head on the arm of the sofa, and appeared plunged in dreadful thought.

I listened with deep emotion to this

genuine and convulsive burst of despair! the awful lesson of humbled pride and abused distinctions before me, filled me with sensations that banished all recollections of myself. I spoke something of comfort—of better hopes—of happier prospects; but the neglect of my *own reproached and silenced me*. She started up—“Are *they* coming?---*they* must not see me this way. Remember, I conjure, my request—the request of a dying woman; and—I would have said a word about poor Athanasia, but I have not time to say a word, or even think a thought, about myself---*tant mieux, où tant pis*. “I hardly know----I hardly know which” (said she, assuming her *character* with almost magical expedition, as Lady Georgina glided into the room) “I hardly know which to prefer for this cabinet; orange drapery to correspond with the antiques in the cornice ---or dark green, as the chimney-piece

is of verde-antico. I believe we must consult Hope---his work is lying on the secretaire in the next room." She passed on with the light step of a grace.---" But is it possible you could *think* of nothing since, Lady Georgina?" No, indeed," said Lady Georgina, with the most simple earnestness. " Oh then, speak without thinking---it will do just as well I dare say; I assure you it is what I am *trying* to do at this moment---with the worst success in the world."

There appeared little reason for this last complaint; for at this moment the rest of the loungers came up, and Lady Montrevor was all herself again. The voice of flattery, and of crowds, seemed to operate upon her most awful paroxysms of feeling, as if by instinct; and through her mask of rouge and pearl-powder, no thought infirm could be *seen* " to alter her cheek." She wandered through the rooms, pouring out all the appropriate

informations from all the writers on the subject, from Ulloa to Robertson inclusive; till looking at her watch, in the midst of a glittering sentence, she recollected a private auction of *emigrè* toys, the property of Madame la Duchesse de ———, which “ she would not miss for the world,” and hurried away as fast as possible, uttering the word—remember, as she passed me.

It was now near four o'clock: the commission of Lady M. including a new subject of interest (for she, and every thing relating to her, were still but too interesting to me), I determined to execute immediately: I wished to be engaged in something that would banish for a moment self-solicitude and self-reproach. I traversed Berners Street till it was almost dark, without seeing any object like that which Lady M. had described. I was quitting it, when I was detained by a carriage driving close to the pavement:

I looked up—it was Lady M's. She appeared to start at my sight, but collected herself in a moment: I leaned on the carriage window; her servants were apparently making some inquiries which she was anxious to conceal the object of from me. She talked and laughed with unusual vivacity. — “ You cannot imagine how extravagant I have been; but those French toys are so beautiful—they certainly have the art *à eterniser la bagatelle*—and it is a very useful one, particularly when one has no other hope of immortality. You will wonder at my acquisitions,” (said she, endeavouring to draw my eye to the interior of the carriage) “ and ‘ wonder is involuntary praise.’ And you will wonder more how I could make them, after all my losses last night—that dreadful dowager!—actually, I lost merely to vex her:—first she scolded me out of all attention to the game, and then scolded me for

having lost it. I never shall see her frightful mountain of powdered curls (only think of her persisting to wear powder!) without thinking of the *wool-pack clouds* that Mount Vesuvius always sends forth previous to an explosion."

All this time her quick eye was reading something like inquiry in my face, which all her gaiety and wit had not been able to talk away. "What *can* you be thinking of, with that face of absence?—actually I might believe you in love, if I did not know you were married—*les Egaremens de cœur et de l'esprit* are always allied you know." "If *absence*," said I, "be an evidence of love, what shall I conclude of the state of your ladyship's heart? I heard you say half an hour ago, that you had but just time to be at the auction, and hurry home; and I now find you in a direction quite opposite to either—this is surely not the way to Berkley Square." "Oh, yes; it is *my*

way : — a woman's way is always odd, and perverse, and uncommon, you know. Since I have nothing to do but to go to Berkley Square, I am determined to do that. "nothing in so strange a style," as will *amaze* the *majority*, and divert the rest of the world, according to the poetical computation. So now *smile*, on pain of being incontinently classed among the *unlearned*."

I was disposed to do any thing but smile at that moment. "Have you *forgot*?" said I, in a serious tone:—"Oh, no; but *you* have forgot, or mistaken, your commission. I sent you out to *meet* a ghost, and instead of that, you are personating a ghost yourself. What, not a simper;—I believe I must whisper the *charm*, or *charms* of Lady Delphina Orberry to raise one." "Not if you wish to make me *smile*." "Oh, smiles are of a thousand *casts*, you know; for instance, the one which, with all my art, I have called

up from the depths of your countenance, is the offspring of surprize and contempt."

"No, — but your spirits astonish me; and there is a secret in them, and your situation, which I am unable to penetrate." "Wonderful!—then, not to demand from you—what no man possesses—knowledge of the female character—*au fonde*—without *conducting* the spark of conviction through a long *chain* of argument, I will flash it upon you at once—I am a woman!—When you recover yourself, bid my coachman drive on."

"Where shall I bid him go?" "I—I actually don't recollect—philosophy you see drives every thing else out of the head—and while you stand there like the ghost of Beatrice in the Monk, I can do nothing but gaze in silence *de ma parte*;—so, walk about a hundred yards, and return, and by that I will forget you, and remember myself, I hope."

Half laughing at the whimsical injunc-

tion, I obeyed; but before I had moved half a hundred yards, I heard the coach drive away rapidly. I knew that Lady M. would laugh all this away with her usual gay facility, but I could not part with her so; there was something of convulsive and delirious gaiety that terrified, contrasted with what I knew of her real despondency. I followed the carriage with all my speed; the lamps were now lit—I pursued it with my eye, and after some obscure windings, I saw it stop at the door of a small private house.

No suspicion till that moment had ever shadowed my mind. Lady M. appeared to me, by her extraordinary endowments, and extraordinary vanity, raised quite above the petty characters, and objects of her sex, either in the *Egaremens de Cœur ou de l'Esprit*. She was raised by ambition to a 'painful pre-eminence,' which she maintained without weakness, or sympathy, an eminence

of distinction, and pride, and solitary suffering. Her passions, like all the rest, were completely under the controul of her pride; a bitter and melancholy greatness was all she desired or possessed; and though sometimes "tears, such as angels weep, burst forth," at the "loss of her original brightness;" yet in general she seemed to think, "to reign was worth ambition;" though among fallen and inferior natures. At this moment, something like a suspicion of a part of her character being altogether human, crossed my mind, as I saw her folding her pelisse about her, and with her handkerchief to her face, enter the house, after speaking a few words to her servant, who, immediately with the carriage disappeared.

I approached the house; it was a mean, obscure house, and after much examination, I hardly recollected it (by the assistance of the number and an

emblematic scroll over the door) to be the residence of a person, who was a professed astrologer, and against whose marvellous pretensions, I had heard Lady M. point all the powers of her ridicule and wit, in a crowded assembly, a few days past. I was actually overcome by this last melancholy proof of the 'overthrow of a noble mind.'—To this cause, this last retreat of a trembling, and agonizing mind, pushed from its grasp of hope, or reason, I ascribed her late superstitious terrors, and struggles of miserable gaiety, to hide a weakness, which she herself felt was contemptible and degrading while she bowed to it; but I had now scarce time to think for myself, for Athanasia. The resolution I had formed of tearing myself, by one desperate effort of strength, from the toils that beset me; and of retreating with my invaluable partner into rest and happiness, delighted me with its rich and

exquisite imagery ; but in determining the event, I had overlooked the means—distress, actual distress, was rapidly approaching. I had no means of paying the enormous debts I had contracted---of some of them I expected the payment to be exacted in that very week—I had not a single weapon, a single expedient to oppose the misery of actual and present beggary.

As I grasped my almost empty purse, in a kind of vacant agony, I felt Lady Delphina's *key* in my hand ; at that moment, I felt the superiority which the enthusiasm of excellence and affection can give above all local advantages.—At that moment, I felt myself in the possession of Athanasia rich, though almost penniless ; and happy, though assaulted by every shape of wretchedness. I could not resist the triumph, with which the recollection of the key supplied me. I went to Lady Delphina, with her key in my hand,

I told her of the tempted innocence; the purified virtue of Athanasia, ten thousand times more precious, in my eyes, than if it had never been tried and found perfect. I told her of my triumph and my shame; I told her of my intentions, immediately to extricate myself from my pecuniary, and all *other* embarrassments; and retiring to cultivate the happiness over which I had hitherto slumbered with a criminal negligence, that neither deserved, nor enjoyed it. I spoke with energy—with enthusiasm; my affections were again excited, they flowed from the deep sources of love, and gratitude, and admiration; and their flow was full and rapid, and unresisted. *She* did not attempt to resist it---she listened with astonishing composure; and then calmly asked me, by *what means* I purposed to extricate myself from my pecuniary, and *other* embarrassments? I was silent---I knew of no means upon earth, at that

moment. My resolution appeared to me to wear all the vigour of action. I believed it actually done, when it was once determined.---She perceived my confusion. "The happiness I must never know, I will, at least, facilitate," said she, in tones that had lost their vibration to my heart, "you must not injure your expected family, or alarm your wife, or commit yourself, by dealing with professed money-lenders, who always double the distress they affect to relieve. Apply to a Jew, I advise; I would intreat, but that I have lost all power of intreaty; I am contented to lose it, if I may yet be of service to you; the ordinary, unsuspected service of friendship; common, worldly good-will—is that too much?"—"No, no—I shall always remember your kindness, your name, your image, with, perhaps, too much softness; too much pleasure—gratitude, I would say; but this is no time for the indul-

gence of such feelings. The honor, the principles of a man, an husband—call upon me to tear myself from these infamous involvements. When I have satisfied honor, I may then indulge feeling—till then, my only feelings are agony and impatience. The method you propose is safe, I believe, though I know but little of these matters; but Jews, if I am not misinformed, require not only an exorbitant interest, but an exorbitant premium—I have no ready money.”

“ But I have, give me your bond for the premium, which I will advance; and to-night, you shall be freed from all your embarrassments.”

That night, I received from a Jew, whom Lady Delphina summoned, a sum adequate to the entire discharge of all my debts, at the head of which was a *douceur* of one thousand guineas to the infamous Sir John, on the receipt of which, she promised to procure from

him, a written obligation to decline the prosecution---An obligation, by which, in the hurry of my joy, I did not discover no man could legally be bound. All was concluded, I made an exact statement of my debts, and received the money from the Jew, who departed gratified with the enormous usury of the premium; for the amount of which, I gave my bond to Lady Delphina, who was now my sole creditor.

Happiness now seemed no longer a vision. With the natural luxury of mind, that suggests refinements in pleasures, I determined not to disclose my purposes, or my hopes, to Athanasia, till I had realised them, by a complete liberation from the involvements of debt and dissipation; till I could clasp her to a heart that had not a care but for her; and—but I am telling my dreams. On my arrival home, I found Athanasia was abroad: I knew that some of the fancy-

groupes were to meet that night, at Lady Westhampton's, to rehearse their attitudes, drapery, costume, &c. I repaired there, at a late hour, in high spirits—all was frolick and festivity. I mingled in the madness of the hour, and forgot, in the long-absent luxury of joy, my enmity to Lord Castle-Wycomb, and even my detestation of Deloraine.

They had all exhibited the utmost range of their fancy and gaiety; the prospect of the following night had revived the recollection of a masquerade some years ago, at which Lady M. had distinguished herself, in the character of Roxalana, in the Sultan. She was importuned to exhibit some passages from it again; and, in high spirits complied, on condition of Lord Westhampton's personating the Sultan. Nothing could exceed the *esprit*, the *maniere naïve et bizarre* of the seraglio coquet, except the awkward and rueful silence of the

Sultan, who, swathed in shawls, and turbaned with the handkerchiefs of his fair tormentor, sat sullenly on the sofa, afraid of ridicule, whether he stirred, or spoke, or remained mute and passive.—

Shocked as I was at this levity of despair in Lady M. it was yet impossible to resist the fascination of her wit and gaiety. I was dazzled, like all the rest of the world, by a brilliancy, that sometimes dazzled even herself. In the course of the evening, I was pressed to play, by some spiritless loungers, whom nothing but gaming could excite. — I refused steadily ; I believe, audibly ; for from that moment Lady M's spirits seemed to redouble, and she played her part, I thought, with more natural gaiety.

When the *scene* was over, and a select party, who had been invited to sup, were in raptures of admiration at Lady M.'s "delightful powers"---I approached her, for a moment unobserved, and whisper-

ed, "I am too much interested for you to be deceived by all this---I am impatient to speak to you alone---I have new plans, new hopes, and in those of *happiness*—*you must* be included."——

"Well—well—don't talk of happiness to-night. I am in high spirits, and any mention of any thing so *remote*, would only depress them."—"But, why this perpetual sacrifice of yourself to—" "Oh! they who live to please, must please to live. So, lay aside that oracular face, if you mean that I should *consult* it; if you mean to impose on my understanding, begin to impose on my senses."

"Impose on your understanding?"—

"Yes; is it not imposition to talk of happiness to *me*?—Well, I *will* listen to your plans of happiness, and laugh at them, all for your encouragement; for if a smile imply satisfaction, *a plus forte*." "Your belief of my facility in being flattered with such approbation

must be very great!" "Oh no; there is no flattery too *piquante* for a theorist: If I dropped asleep during your *plans*, I would undertake to persuade you, it was only that I might dream of them, undisturbed." "Can you be serious for a moment?" "For the present, I *dare* not. Come to my dressing-room to-morrow night, the crowd will be too great to suspect any thing *serious* in our retiring, and we'll try what can be done; perhaps, by that time, all further necessity for *acting* a part, whether gay or serious, will be at an end. In the meantime, however, we are remaining too long *behind the scenes*."

She rose from the sofa as she spoke, she saw something more than common interest, or common intelligence in my face. She dreaded the discovery of her weakness, and weakness she never could bear to betray; she wished to destroy the effect of what she had been saying, with

references to her superstitious terrors, and fixing her dark eyes on me, as if she meant to *fascinate* me—"Confess now, that the etourderies of the morning and evening have amazed you, if they have not made you smile; perhaps, the confession would be as bad a compliment to my understanding as your own; for "true no-meaning puzzles more than wit." I knew, she said this to efface my belief of her having any *meaning* in the finesses of the morning, or the allusions of the evening. I could not bear to insult her with the knowledge of her weakness, and I suffered her to believe that I was deceived.

The supper was uncommonly brilliant. Lady M. was in unusual spirits: and though none of her daughters could contend with her in beauty, or grace, or esprit; yet the assemblage of so many lovely women, sparkling in all the luxury of modern costume, and all the brilliancy

of *modern maniere*, presented a coup-d'œil too gratifying to the senses. No human power could at that moment have discovered, under such an exterior, the passions that were tearing every heart—no one could have believed at that moment, the despair of the bright leader of the fashionable host, or the degeneracy of her glittering, fallen train—the very means that had supplied this splendid fête, would have disclosed a shocking history, had they been known.

Lady Castle-Wycomb, as I afterwards learned, had levied the most enormous exactions on Lady Westhampton, since her marriage, partly to indemnify herself for the speculation on her marriage, and partly on threatening to disclose to her Lord, certain little inaccuracies of conduct, into which her sister had been betrayed while under her fashionable protection, and *fashionable example*.

Lady W. weary of extortion and oppression, threatened to retaliate; and hinted, that certain particulars, in her knowledge, would probably be as acceptable to Lord Castle-Wycomb.—“There, my dear, you are quite mistaken;” said her sister, with perfect nonchalance. “Lord C. W. and I have come to a treaty offensive and defensive, as other powers do, by mutual good understanding; you can tell him nothing more than he knows, or believes he knows, which is the same thing; and he is determined to ‘bear his faculties so meekly’, that he will be ‘as one who knoweth nothing.’ Now, you must be sensible it is quite a different case with Lord Westhampton; he has got some old-fashioned principles, that if once touched *properly*, would bristle up till he became a perfect porcupine in a passion. In one word, he has so much love for you, or for himself, that I am con-

vinced he would almost kill you in a paroxysm of jealousy, if it was once fairly or foully excited. So you see, my dear, you need not contend with me—I have fairly the 'vantage ground—I must have money for this fête; nothing else will do—for it or *me*. I am completely a cypher in my own house, since Lady M's arrival. I shall get rid of her with all convenient expedition; but in the mean time, it will be delightful to out-shine her on the spot. I will shine in *your* gold, my dear, if you please, and I am sure you must be gratified by the preference."

Again Lady W. assured her that she had advanced all the money she had received from her Lord; that his wealth and generosity, though great, were not boundless, and that she had no excuses for further extortions. — "Besides, I know my supplies must always be insufficient, while you play and lose so despe-

rately, and double your debts by borrowing from your creditors. Do you imagine I can ever enable you to repay Mrs. Rees, the sum you borrowed from her?"

"Oh, I am quite easy about that; for she has allowed me to pay her more than the legal interest; and if she reclaims the principal, I can threaten to prosecute, instead of paying it." "Gracious heaven! who could suggest so villainous a scheme!"

"Oh, it was *Mason*, put me up to that, and every thing else in the way of business. He is extremely clever and useful, and"—"And, who is *Mason*?"

"Oh, you must *know Mason*!" said Lady C. in visible confusion, "He that was my Lord's assistant, or I don't know what; but what matter about *Mason*, I must have money: I am a bankrupt in every thing; in health, in fortune, in happiness.—Happiness I never knew, or knew it only in distinction: I must enjoy it, therefore, while I can purchase it,

or you *for me*.---Bethel's business turned out badly---he declines playing, though while we had him, we made a good deal of him. — I apprehend Lady Delphina put him on his guard ; and if so, by all that's good, I will make her remember it as long as she lives, which cannot be very long ; for she is consuming with *her own* vices. You see, Pandora, I am the devil, when provoked ! better not urge me---and I am half-mad already ; that insolent wretch refuses to let the ornaments for my table out of his shop, till half the money is paid ; and here I am wasting my time, when you could raise three times the sum, for me, on your diamond necklace."---" My necklace !--- I never will part with my diamonds---raise money on your own." " So I did, my dear, some months ago ; and yet, you see, what a glittering figure I continue to make."

Lady Westhampton wept, wrung her

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hands, cursed all the ways of fashionable life, deplored her being resigned to the example and influence of her sister. "Distinction, distinction, a splendid settlement, was all I have ever heard from my infancy as the object of desire: I am a miserable example of the consequences. I am united to a man I never can love, and tyrannized over and robbed by a woman who *committed* me to vice that she might establish a power over me. Every day I make some new sacrifice of my principles, or my feelings. I know I shall fall into infamy. I know I am undone, for I have every thing to impel me to destruction, and nothing, nothing, no happiness, no honor, no strength of mind to preserve myself." "My dear, I actually have not leisure to see you play out this *comédie larmoyant*, but to convince you that I wish to do everything equitable, be assured that the Rees is included in my *subsidizing* plan. I am determined

to make *un coup d'essai* to-morrow night. I have read in the Life of Charters, I think, of his winning three thousand guineas by placing his antagonist with her back to a glass, which I am determined to try, at least, to-morrow night. The Rees, I know, will soon get tired of her *character*, and long for a game: I will indulge her. If I lose I can only owe it, you know, and if I win, it shall be thousands and ten thousands for your comfort, my dear, as I hope it will. Oh, you must be gone with that dreadful red face, I hear people coming up stairs; they must not meet you all in tears—run into that closet—no, not into that—not into that, oh, for heaven's sake! not *there*." It was too late. Lady Westhampton, intent only on escaping, ran into the first retreat that presented itself, and in that retreat was couched—Mr. Mason!

The event of this *business* was a full explanation between the sisters. Lady

Castle-Wycomb, desperately involved in her circumstances, had called on Mason, her *ci-devant* elect, for pecuniary assistance; she knew his habits of business, and she knew his hatred to Lord Castle-Wycomb for his dismissal of him. Mason, a man of the most rancorous disposition, assisted her only that he might acquire a power over her, of which he made such an use as completely to revenge himself on the husband, by the infamy of the wife. Lady Castle-Wycomb, on the discovery, consented to remit her demands on her sister, on condition she would *undertake the Rees at the masquerade*, according to the looking-glass scheme, half of the profits of which she was contented to allow her; "for you must be sensible that it will be better and more unsuspecting for me to appear quite disengaged on the occasion."

The giddy Lady Westhampton, anxious to relieve her own great losses, and

rejoiced at being permitted to retain her diamonds, consented; and Lady Castle-Wycomb, determined to sacrifice even her avarice to her rage at the *discovery*, dispatched an anonymous note to Mr. Rees, requesting him to observe the situation in which his lady would be placed *the following night by the art of a certain dissipated peeress*, who would engage her at piquet at the masquerade, merely with a view of plundering her by a most fraudulent finesse. Having dispatched this note, by an unsuspected channel, she hurried to her sister's, where the brilliant festivity, that illuminated every mind and countenance, effectually concealed the depravity that raged in many an heart, and the misery that corroded all.

As we returned from this splendid Pandemonium in our carriage, Athanasia, who had partaken more than usual of the *gaieté* of the night, became profoundly silent—I took her hand; I pressed it to

my heart. I longed to tell her *that* heart was burning with wishes for her happiness, with resolutions to make her happy. But till it was relieved from all its sordid misery, till I had discharged every debt, and regained perfect bodily and mental freedom, I determined not to speak of my purposes, for their mention must have included the mention of the means; and my intanglements with Lady Delphina were the last subject I could bring myself to speak, or think of. She gave me her hand coldly, but in a few minutes, apparently dissolved by recollections, her head sunk on my shoulder, and she wept. I believed them the tears of pardon and love. I would not break the sacred silence of her feelings, my heart melted in visions of joy.

The following day I devoted entirely to business. I discharged every debt I owed, reserving only a sum sufficient to support my establishment till the next

remittances from Ireland, to which I purposed to return on receiving them. The delirious dreams of ambition and pleasure were over. My winter in Dublin, and my winter in London, my folly and my madness, rose to my thoughts like the visions of a fever. I fixed my whole soul on that "sober certainty of waking bliss," which I resolved to seek in the arms, the heart of my Athanasia.

The night arrived. I returned fatigued and happy to dine with Bellamy, who had assembled a large male party, who were to accompany us, at night, to the masquerade. Colonel Montolieu, who dined with us, assured us, that even his dressing-room had been put into requisition for the fete, and as he conceived dinner would be quite out of the question at Berkley Square, he came where he knew he would not be compelled to dine on paper hangings, and wash down his dinner with the contents of a jar of oil-colours.

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I had still a jealousy of meeting Athanasia. I knew she was to dine at Lady Invermay's, in whose *groupe* she went, and I ordered the domino, which I intended to wear, to Bellamy's at nine o'clock. It was near eleven when we reached Berkley-Square. The concourse and tumult impeded all approach for an hour; but those who entered were repaid by a blaze of such splendor as had never before been witnessed. The hall and stair-case were filled with the most exquisite imitations of the vegetable productions of South America, among which lights half-concealed glimmered, as if through the foliage of groves. The principal stair-case terminated in a spacious gallery, which extending the whole front of the house exhibited the Temple of the Sun, in all the magnificence of Peruvian worship, as Peruvian magnificence has been represented by dramatists and romancers. Pillars, in imitated green mar-

ble, wreathed with gold and ruby foliage, supported a roof whose cornice was formed of volumes of golden exhalations tinged with amber, and rose, and purple, to represent the approach of day. The centre of the roof represented the rites of Peruvian worship, bloodless, simple, consisting principally of offerings of fruits and flowers, which were represented with the most glowing luxury of colouring, and exuberance of disposition. The opposite extremities of the cieling represented the sun rising over the summit of a mountain, which blushed with all the glories of the dawn, and sinking into his western bed of waters, where a long track of vivid light contrasted the rich dark green of ocean, and the brilliant and fantastic forms that were sporting in his setting ray, and showing "their waved coats dropt with gold."

In the recesses formed by the pillars, painting conducted the eye through

long, artificial perspectives, filled with priests and virgins of the sun; inferior altars supported vases of flowers, or of lights, from which perfumes steamed like incense; but, at the upper end of the temple, a splendid, transparent veil, glittering with representations of the vivifying influence of the sun, in animal and vegetable life, the productions of the earth, and the imaginary forms of the elements, was suspended from the cieling to the floor, while a rich and radiant glow of transparent light, emanating through it, intimated the presence of the great object of Western idolatry.

Beyond this, two other spacious apartments, or ranges of apartments, though less splendid, solicited, by the variety and exquisite taste of their decorations. The first (of which the cieling was tinged with the glowing and cloudless blue that some regions of that climate see stretched over their heads, and whose walls

were divided into compartments, by plantains, their trunks wreathed with flowers, and their branches alive with the burnished tints, and airy forms of the beautiful birds of the climate) was decorated with paintings representing the most striking passages of Peruvian history; the first interview of the unfortunate Ataliba with the Spanish troops; the magnificence of his train and procession; the car enamelled with pearl and diamond, and glowing with the luxuriant plumage of his country, from which he was dragged by the hands of the Spanish soldiers. In another part of the room, the paintings represented the modern state of South America, views of the country and sketches of the inhabitants, in all the varieties of the mingled, the native, and the Spanish costume.

The next apartment carried the spectator to another world---a world of horrors !---All the awakened rage of the cli-

mate, whose beauties blushed in the adjacent regions of pleasure, were portrayed here. The mountain, the volcano, the rage of the tempest, the desolation of the earthquake---here torrents of lava, and clouds of fire burned through the blackness with intense and sulphurous glare; and here the ruins of Lima, the capital of Peru, tottering on the gulph that yawned below its foundations, presented the mingled and terrible convulsions of art and nature---the aspect of the earth, and the works of man. The dim light that played on these objects was supplied by transparencies of the various fires with which the terrible picture glowed, and the cieling was filled with a gigantic figure, who throned amid storms, lightnings, and meteors, according to the description in Campbell's well known poem, "looked from his throne of clouds o'er half the world."

The splendor of the apartments, if

possible, was exceeded by that of the brilliant groups who filled them: nearly seven hundred persons of distinguished fashion, in all the captivating and fantastic luxury of masquerade costume, glittered in the apartments. Among them were easily distinguished Lady Castle-Wycomb, in the gorgeous character of High Priestess of the Sun; a character which she said she preferred, as it "required a great deal to *look*, and nothing to say." Lord Invermay, his lady, and Athanasia, formed a very striking group as the "Ladye of Branksome, Lord Cranstoun, and the fair Margaret" in the Lay of the last Minstrel; they had persuaded Sir John Orberry to accompany them, as the "Goblin Page." He needed but little to disfigure him in character. But all eyes were dazzled, and all hearts captivated, by the blaze of attraction and sensibility exhibited by the still *too beautiful* Lady Montrevor, in

the costume of the celebrated "La Valiere, as she appears in the picture of the Orleans Gallery, in the act of renouncing all the splendors of luxury, and all the blandishments of the world, " which she loved too well."

My heart throbbed with long forgotten sensations, and my eyes failed, as I gazed on her; but at this moment, my attention was arrested, by the languishment of two dark, soft, eloquent eyes fixed on me. In the habit of a Spanish gipsy, Lady Delphina Orberry had consulted all the touching beauty, and all the bland, and playful witcheries of manner, by which she was distinguished. I yielded to the allurements of the scene—I remembered that this was to be my last night of pleasure—I wandered with her round the circle---she hung on my arm, and I suffered myself to be amused by the address with which she blended her fictitious with her real character.

“ Oh, Cavalier, what would the lady of your love give for the looks which you have bestowed on that beautiful figure,” pointing to Lady M. “ I would be sorry, if the lady of my *love* were jealous of looks that *mean* only *admiration*.”---

“ Oh, Cavalier, contend not with me in knowledge of the meaning of looks---I know what they mean *too* well---admiration never fixed such burning looks on its object yet.”---“ Do you speak from your own feelings, or those of your profession ?”---“ From both.”---“ Then be assured, that they both deceive you---to deceive is your profession---to deceive, I am afraid, is your nature ; at least to throw over life, those delicious deceptions, which we lament only when they cease. Be not displeased with me then, enchantress, if I warn you against exercising those deceptions on your own feelings, which it is your sport or your wrath,

to practise on others. If I warn you that admiration may exist without love, and love itself without distinguished admiration."---" Oh, Cavalier, that eye, and that lip, are always at variance---never did a lip of rose, and an eye of dark; brilliant fire, talk such opposite language. Which shall I read?."---" Neither---read my heart."---" What does it say?."---" That I am the happy, happy husband of a lovely, a beloved angel-wife, and"-----" And the lover, the *happy, happy* lover of *her angel-mother*."---" Away, you tempt me beyond my patience---beyond all patience: no *fiction* can excuse this license."---" But *truth* may."---" Gracious heaven!—What *can* you mean?"---" What *can you* mean, by this silly, pedantic language?—Was this the language you learned to speak at Montrevor house?—Ah, no—gallant and gay, in ——'s proud alcove, the bower of

wanton—and love! Shall I fill up *the blanks?*—“No, leave it a blank for ever, for your own sake.”—“Ha, ha, ha!—how you are altered—quite a Janus, with two faces: an old, frozen, forbidden, *moral* one; and another, such another as you gazed at the *beautiful* Lady M. with just now. Ha, ha, ha—a most ‘*delicate* monster, with *two* voices’—one for a mistress, the other for a *friend*; but remember, this privilege of simony in gallantry—this privilege of erring with such gross impunity, and preaching to inferior offenders, is *not in the bond*.” She burst from me; it was no place to indulge the passions with which she had filled me—filled me almost to madness.

At that moment, I was born away by the croud to the *volcano*-room: amid the tumult of voices, and of my own feelings—a strange, wild, mournful sound, made itself be heard. A figure approached—tall and majestic, in the ancient Irish

habit: he bore in his hand an harp, constructed according to the model of that of Brian Boree, now in the University Museum of Dublin; it was from this he drew the melancholy, expressive tones, which, together with his remarkable figure, had drawn numbers around him. The moment I saw him, I was struck with his resemblance to the figure who had addressed Lady M. on the staircase, during a crowded assembly, some nights past: but I had no time for conjectures, for at this moment Lady M., who had exchanged her costume, for that of "*Glorvina, in the Wild Irish Girl*," floated with a glittering train round her into the room, flashing around her beauty and her wit with lavish ease; she was in the midst of a ludicrous description of the *natural* productions of the country from which she said she was just arrived, when she and the Irish minstrel exactly met in the circle. Lady Delphi-

na was close to me at that moment, "I must retire," she whispered, "for here comes a tempest of provocation." I hardly heard her, for just then the crowd, struck by a strange similarity in the habits of the stranger and Lady Montrevor, had withdrawn on each side, and left them almost together. The stranger stopped, and fixed his eyes on Lady Montrevor; I saw hers fixed with a kind of wildness on him; he mingled in the crowd, she appeared to me sinking as I once before saw her. I rushed to her, she grasped my arm, her command of herself was so great that she neither screamed nor spoke; through the mask of her paint no emotion could be traced, but the cold dew of fear forced themselves through all her rouge and stood trembling in ghastly drops on her forehead and cheeks. "What shall I do?" I said, "Who is this? what shall I do for you or him?" "Follow him, oh follow him," she whispered in a

manner which she had the presence of mind to give the appearance of masquerade *gibier* to, "follow him, if *he be* alive, but he cannot live for me."

It was in vain that I plunged with unrelenting violence through crowds of sultanas, chimney-sweepers, angels, and devils ; in every room I pursued, in every groupe I sought him, in vain. The crowd and heat were now almost intolerable, and the levity around only exaggerated the distraction of my mind. I knew not what to think, he seemed indeed to be a creature of the elements, that could appear and disappear at his pleasure. I still less knew what to tell Lady M. I dreaded to terrify her by silence, I dreaded to terrify her by telling her what I knew, or did not know of the stranger.

As I still wandered through the throng, a strong hand grasped mine, I turned round, it was the stranger: "You appear, Sir, to be a friend of Lady Montrevor's," said he, "am I to think so

of you, or an admirer only; I believe the number of the latter, has rather exceeded that of the former." "Inform me first, Sir, what am I to think of you, your appearance"----"No matter for my appearance, and no matter for your opinion of me. If you are her friend, give her this note, if you are not, hover round her still, and feed her with the sweet poison of flattery, till she dies of it; but tell her withal, that let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come:" he pointed to his own furrowed and sallow cheek and disappeared.

As I still held the note, and pondered on this wild message, it struck me that I had heard the tones of that voice once before, but where or when had vanished from my memory. I had to "fight all my battles o'er again," to regain the place where I had left Lady M. who always possessing address enough to hide the vicissitudes of feeling under the pretence of local caprice, had thrown

herself on a sofa, and was declaring she was "quite wearied, *delaissée, ennuyée*, unable to utter another word, or be amused even by the folly of others." "And are you equally incapable of being amused by wit?" said Bellamy, who was lounging near her, "if you are not, come with me in quest of the *Irish peasant*; he said some amazingly good things." "Oh quite incapable," said she, affecting to yawn violently; "in an exhausted receiver you know, a feather and gold are equally light, or to *apply, equally heavy*. Oh Mr. Bethel, you *could not get me a glass of ice*, or if you did I suppose you *thawed* it with a *look*---you appear dreadfully heated---do try, Bellamy, to get me something, and do not be frozen in the attempt."---Bellamy laughed and attempted to obey her. "Now that I have sent him away to do a thing impossible," said she, "for heaven's sake tell me all in a word, have you seen him,

have you spoken to him, has he---"? "He has given me this note, for you. I am as anxious as you can be, that you should read it; could you now retire for a few moments to your dressing room"? "I can, and do you follow me, in a few moments after."

As I followed her, I observed Lady Delphina near the door, in close conversation with a tall figure in a Spanish habit whom I immediately discovered to be Lord Montrevor. I hurried to Lady M's dressing room---she was traversing the room with rapid steps, her form almost ethereal with joy. "He is alive---he is alive---he loves me still." She fell upon a seat, her voice faltered, the hand which she spread before her face trembled, "loves me, worthless, degraded, perverted as I am, with nothing left, nothing left of my former self, but an heart that never forgot him, and virtue---entirely."---

I took the note which she held out to me; she walked to the glass, she surveyed her gay, fantastic dress, her delicious form scarce veiled by the transparent drapery of luxurious nakedness, her costume sparkling with the fanciful regalia of the western princess; her whole appearance a combination of glittering levity, and voluptuous magnificence; the glow of feeling out-blushed all her rouge.

“What a figure do I present——what a figure for one who might have been so different a figure in this world, or out of it—who might have been an honoured, an happy wife,——a mother! ——What am I now?—and yet he loves me still—and yet I will struggle to be something worthy of his love, worthy of myself.”---“This is the moment, the very moment I have wished---I have prayed for; be yourself---dare to be yourself, and you must be all that is good and happy; the present opportunity seems of-

ferred by heaven for your happiness, for the happiness of us all. I am going to Ireland; come with us, with Athanasia who loves you, with me who---come with us, any excuse will serve the world, and Lord M.; you want no excuse for visiting your daughter---we will, we must be happy !”

I related as briefly as I could, the circumstances that had occurred in the few preceding days. I dwelt on my extrication from distress, from involvement, from Lady Delphina. I told her of the infamous conduct of Lord C. and the villain Deloraine—conduct I *now* could neither resent nor punish---but which---she interrupted me---“As to Lord C. I always believed him, and told you I believed him to be a mere political character, who, in playing his cards, would take care to *deal all the honors* to himself; yet I thought your talents might strike him: as to Deloraine, I always thought him a

villain, but as I had no reason for thinking so, except physiognomy or caprice, I did not wish to teach your mind "the needful vice of suspicion." She eagerly inquired by what means I had extricated myself---I informed her----she shook her head---"It must not be, to that woman you must owe nothing; if all I can supply you with can discharge your debt to her, you shall not be a debtor beyond to-morrow. I will have no further occasion for expences---for such expences---it is to be hoped."

I congratulated---I consoled---I tried to confirm her:---"Oh, my dear friend! I will confess to you, that if I did not almost think it *too late*, I would suffer myself to dream again of hope and of happiness. I was formed to be a domestic creature. If any thing could give me strength of mind to resist the fatal infatuation that has almost destroyed me---the infatuation of vanity and

despair---it would be the thought of yet acquiring, the thought of deserving that man's approbation. His *approbation*---observe, I mean nothing more. I should forfeit *it*---I should forfeit my own, if I could think of any thing else. There is a date for passion---but, there is, thank Heaven! no date for virtue or for happiness.

But am I not mad, or *doting*, to talk of virtue and happiness? I who have lived such a life---who *am* living such a life. What a figure *I* shall be, going to a school of reform!---and what a figure in a school."

Again she looked at herself in the glass, with a struggle of melancholy vanity.---"But what a wretch I am to talk thus. I who have made such sacrifices to a world I despised---to a world that has destroyed me, almost! I who have sacrificed myself to it, now to hesitate to sacrifice it for *myself*---for more than

myself---for more than I have ever known or been of myself.——Ah! I see you smile:---is it a smile of encouragement? Oh, tell me what you think of me?---tell me not what the world will think or say. Can I ever, *ever* emerge?---Will the pure air of retirement, of peace, of happiness, breathe its balm to heal the scar of these corrosive fires'---or is it your *mal dû pays* that deceives us both?——

She sunk again on the sofa; how lovely, how interesting she looked at that moment—My utterance was impeded—I scarcely articulated. Her beauty, her despair, an air of wild and melancholy grandeur, of hope contending against hope, darkened her face with a kind of sad brightness. “I never, never thought you “less than arch-angel ruined,” but now, I hope—I am convinced—I would pledge my existence, you will yet be all that woman can be of excellent—as you have always been all—too much all of

lovely"—“*Allons donc, à l'Ireland*, you know, it is the *Island of Saints*, so we shall be quite in character, by being out of all *human* character. I protest I only fear we shall be too perfect; so lest I should rise too rapidly in my own estimation, I will go talk nonsense to all the world for another hour—once more let's “mock the midnight bell.” Oh, my dear Ormsby, don't despise me for this levity—it is not levity—a glow of natural feeling pervades my whole heart and soul, and if I don't laugh, I must certainly cry.”

At this moment she looked so lovely that I involuntarily kissed the hand she extended to me. We were quitting the room, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and Lord Montrevor entered. I had a glimpse of another figure that glided down the passage—it was Lady Delphina. My mind was at that moment so occupied by the new world of happiness that had burst on it, that I no-

ticed neither his entrance, nor his looks, but silently relinquishing Lady Montrevor's hand, I flew to the gallery to pour my intelligence, and my hope, and my joy, into the bosom of Athanasia. I *could* no longer conceal them; there was no longer any reason for concealing them. Lady Montrevor had promised to liquidate my debt to Lady Delphina, and to accompany us to Ireland. What intelligence for Athanasia. How my heart swelled and panted with its treasure.

The gallery was almost deserted; the company had crowded to the supper rooms, impatient for the display of a new blaze of luxury and splendor. In the adjacent rooms were only a few gamblers, clinging to the tables, from which no temptation could solicit them; among these I observed, in a *private room*, Lady Westhampton and the devoted Rees in *proper attitudes*. Mr. Rees was near them, with a look of angry vigilance, which I did

not understand *then*. In vain I searched for Athanasia everywhere. On the staircase I met Lady Invermay and her party. I enquired for Mrs. Bethel. Lady Invermay believed she was gone: she had complained of the crowd, and quitted her party at an early hour. Vexed and disappointed, I forced my way through the crowd on the staircase, and throwing myself into the first carriage I saw, hurried home. "Has your Lady returned yet?" No, was the answer. I continued to traverse the room impatiently—the clock struck five, and six and seven. Amazed, and almost terrified, I hurried back to Berkley-Square. The crowd had not yet entirely dispersed; but in their appearance, and the broken expressions I heard, I caught some extraordinary intimations. I rushed into the house; it was now broad day-light; the half-extinguished lamps burnt faintly, and the dim discoloured ornaments bore a melancholy look. As I

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hurried through the deserted rooms, a voice of agony struck my ear, it uttered a long, deep, continued cry of distress. I recollected the voice to be Lady Westhampton. I threw open the door of a small room in which refreshments had been distributed. By a single light which burnt dimly, I could scarcely see this young victim of fashionable seduction stretched on the ground, at the foot of a sofa, from which she had sunk in apparent weakness, drenched, absorbed in tears, her splendid ornaments strewing the floor around her—I approached; I attempted to raise her. “Oh, I am undone! undone!” she exclaimed, in despair, “let me go, let me die, let me sink into the earth—I am undone for ever!” Hardly could I obtain from her a coherent answer; still I importuned her, for I felt there was something impending; at last I understood the dreadful commo-

tion that had followed on my quitting Berkley-Square in pursuit of Athanasia.

Lady W. according to the plan of her depraved sister, had been observed by Mr. Rees in the whole process of defrauding his wife of 8000 guineas; and in the moment that she was rising from the table in triumph, he charged her with the fraud, before a number of witnesses whom he had assembled and stationed in proper places. Naturally weak, and timid from detected guilt, Lady W. at once confessed the fraud, and restored the money: this was not enough for Rees, who saw his power, and wished to use it, to break off the ruinous connection between his wife and Lady Castle-Wycomb. He talked loud, and threatened prosecution; and what was worse, a complaint to her lord. Terrified to agony, Lady W. threw the whole blame on her sister; who, she asserted, was the fabricator of the whole mystery of ini-

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quity—who had driven her to involuntary vice—who had undone her, by all the influence of example and compulsion.

The tumult now became general:—Lady C. was condemned and vilified by all; Lady Westhampton accused, and Rees menaced her; and Mrs. Rees, safe in her husband's resentment being transferred to another object, now poured out her "secret memoirs," with a fluency and virulence that shocked as much as the depravity it related. But in the midst of all this burst of condemnation, it was discovered that Lady Castle-Wycomb was far beyond its reach: at the first gathering of the storm, she had foreseen her danger, and yielding at once to fear, despair, and depraved inclination, fled from her house with Mason, who was disguised among the attendants, to await the events of the night. "But on me, on me all the burthen of shame and

suffering has fallen," frantically sobbed the victim of fashion; "my lord, distracted with passion at my disgrace, swears he will confine me for life, in his old ruinous castle in Leicestershire. I am to be dragged away this very hour!—He has gone to order the carriages—I expect him every moment—and oh! such is his fury, I am sure he will destroy me before we have completed our dreadful journey!"

Again she sunk on the floor, in convulsions of agony, and cursed the compulsive misery into which she had been dragged by fashionable example. "But, Mr. Bethel," said she, recovering her voice, and staring wildly at me, "is it possible you are here?—you, whom my father found, in such shocking circumstances, in my mother's dressing-room!" She laughed, fearfully. "I am not alone in the shame and misery of this night—you are destroyed for ever. Lord M. has

declared his intention of separating from her, and prosecuting *you*, and declares that he has long suspected the whole affair, and has witnesses to prove it existed long *before he quitted Ireland.*"

* * * * *

I recovered my senses : I flew to Lady Montrevor's apartment : no power could withhold, or delay me. In the presence—in the despite of men and devils, I determined to vindicate her with a force and truth, that should write conviction as with the lightning's point, upon every *human* heart. * * * Bennet was weeping before the door. " You must not pass!—begone!—you have undone yourself—you have *undone us all for ever.*" I pushed her away, with no gentle hand. Lady M. heard the tumult—She demanded—" Who was there?" I felt myself unable to utter my own name, but she knew the sound of my voice.

“ The door is locked—you must not enter here—you must not enter *now* ! I applied my shoulder to the door—it began to yield. “ Hold ! ” I heard her scream, in a voice of passion and command—“ *the laudanum is in my hand* !—another movement to enter, and I swallow it.” I fell on my knees at the door—I adjured, I appealed, I supplicated. “ It is too late,” said she, in a dreadful voice. “ I am driven to this—I acquit *you*—I know myself innocent, but I will not outlive public shame: he threatens with it—the monster threatens me with it, who knows my innocence—and with my own son-in-law ! But he is determined on my destruction !—my destruction be on his head ! Remember I am driven to this !—escape from *that sorceress*, if you can: it is her influence over the most weak and wicked of men, that pushes me on self-murder ! ”

I heard no more—I burst into the

room—I tore the laudanum from her hand—convulsions followed. I remember nothing distinctly, but that I saved her life. Lord Montrevor and Colonel Montolieu entered—I remember nothing distinctly—all was rage and madness—and menace and execration! The last thing I remember seeing, was Lady M. apparently lifeless in the arms, and Col. Montolieu kneeling to his father, not to destroy his mother, himself, and his children, by an accusation he knew to be false and infamous—then all recollection forsook me! * * * * *

When I recovered it, I was in a prison.—Slowly my faculties returned. I demanded at whose suit I was arrested. I had discharged every debt I was acquainted with the morning of *the fatal night*. I was informed it was at Lady Delphina Orberry's, for the money due on my bond. I demanded, *where was my wife?* Oh, how I longed for her hands

to bind my burning forehead. I was presented, after some delay, that seemed suggested by humanity, with a letter which was dated the day of the masquerade—the hand was Athanasia's.

* * * * *

“ You will never see me more. I write but to supplicate your forgiveness—your forgiveness for an error, of which the discovery is to me intolerable; for which, though *only mental*, though almost involuntary, I will do penance in everlasting banishment. Oh you, whom I have loved with a love passing that of women, never again can I bear to meet your sweet, generous, killing smile, your soothings, of which the angel tones would be daggers to me. Forgive me, only forgive me, and I will live and die in peace—if possible. While I believed you ignorant of my weakness, of my guilt, for there is guilt of the mind, I hid the anguish of my heart, and tried to

believe that it was my duty to amend my errors without confessing them, that it was enough if I restored you the full and faithful homage of my heart, without humbling myself to say how that heart—no, how my senses had wandered. But you have discovered all, and never will I bear to meet you after the discovery. Remember what I was—a weak, ignorant girl, without education, without example but of vice and folly, left to form my ideas from the vilest of books, aided by the poisonous conversation of the vilest of companions.—Remember that those books taught me, that to yield to sentiment was almost a virtue; and that companion represented it equally as the habit of the world and the duty of romance. I was left to devise my own romance, and in what a tragedy has it terminated! I never loved Deloraine, yet I was taught to believe that I ought to have a lover and an husband; I would have sought

both in you, but what heroine was ever happy with an husband !—When, at last, my heart grew sick of disguise, and my senses of imposition (for who could love Deloraine who was wedded to you) I was told of the duty of fidelity, of the despair and death of the unhappy object of my cruelty, &c. Thus was I led on to act as if I really loved a man who was totally indifferent to me, and was indifferent to an husband whom I adored.—Remember, that though I trod the path of folly with my conductors, I retreated, I broke from them for ever when they would have led me into guilt. Remember, I had no monitor, no assistant, no confidant, no aid but Heaven and my love for you—that will console me in the solitude to which I have devoted myself; that will prompt my last prayer for you. The misery, which the struggles of the last months has caused me, has worn away my health—I have not long to live.

My poor infant stirs within me from the agony in which I write this;—if it lives, it shall be sent to you, and you will weep for me when you see it:---if it dies, let it be laid in its mother's grave. On my knees, with my *last* breath, I implore your forgiveness. Remember, my offence was but mental, and remember how it has been expiated---how I have lost all I ever truly loved on this earth---my mother and you.

A. BETHEL."

* * * * *

My pale and blasted rose****it was I who threw your sweets away!—Over their withering fragrance, so rich in death, I shed the last human drops I believed my eyes would ever shed * * *

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"Can you, will you persist in this dreadful obstinacy? I know *my* love, *my* life are of no consequence to you; but

think of your own—you will die of despair and shame if the prosecution goes on: Lord M. has summoned the most able lawyers, he has procured, *he says*, the most infallible witnesses.—Oh think of such a trial, such an exposure! can you outlive the thoughts of it, can you outlive the fact itself? and it *must*, must happen—if you will not sign this paper:—it confesses—what every one already knows—your unfortunate attachment to Lady M. Lord M. empowers me to say if you will sign this acknowledgment, and admit all it implies, he will stop all the proceedings—why will you hesitate? not from consideration of the ungrateful woman who has betrayed and abandoned you—she has fled from Berkley Square—no one knows where—gone with some other paramour,—and left you here to encounter all the shame and misery that should have fallen on her own head.”

“ I adjure you,” said I, speaking for the first time for some hours, “ to tell me the truth. Has Lady Montrevor escaped from England?—will she not stand the event of the prosecution?”—“ By all that is true and holy!”— and Lady Delphina kissed the cross that hung on her breast. Again she importuned, she supplicated, she adjured me to save myself:—“ *her* you cannot injure by the declaration, her character is decided by her flight, no one can believe her innocent—you may yet save yourself; I plead, I supplicate to you for yourself; I know your proud impetuous spirit,—it will leave your frame breathless the day you hear your infamy proclaimed.—Lord M. has the whole world on his side: what can you do in prison against him?”——“ Who put me there?”——I——“ I did, to prevent Lady Montrevor seducing you to accompany her flight”——“ *Seducing me to accompany her flight!*—merciful

Heaven!—Heaven who knows her purity!—But I appeal no more.—Will this declaration free me, free me fully and finally from all further importunity?”—
 “Yes—cruel that you are!—it will—it shall free you from all further—importunity.”—I fell upon my knees, and in the solemn language of conviction and agony called Heaven to witness my belief of Lady Montrevor’s perfect purity, and my consciousness of my own.—I resigned myself to that power which seemed resolved to “make a spectacle, a tale of me;” but I implored its mercy for her, if she yet existed, with anguish that spoke her innocent to Heaven and Earth.—

Lady Delphina rushed from me in despair. * * * * *

In a few hours she entered again.—Our dreadful conference lasted four hours.—I am forbid “to tell all the secrets of my prison house:”—But the tale that was

unfolded deprived me of breath, of reason, of feeling.—I staggered from her—She held me with her cold hand—“ You must forgive me *now*, for * * * * *

She was in the agonies of death—“ You have driven me to despair—to death—Yet I forgive you—Oh if you feel a spark of mortal passion, let this sight disarm it? I have destroyed you, but I have revenged you—your destroyer is come to die at your feet—If I have sacrificed you to my wild passion, I have also sacrificed myself.

That form, which I see every moment more dimly, was the cause of all—From the moment I saw you, I determined you should be mine—no man ever had resisted me but you—I knew no restraints when my passions are engaged—I never did know any—I believed nothing but distress could subdue your pride, or your reluctance. You were too fond of your

wife to be fond of dissipation for dissipation sake. I found that nothing but your ruin could make you mine—despair and nothing but despair could drive you into my arms. I urged your ruin, for I had determined you should be mine. I extorted money from you by way of bribing Sir John. Sir John never knew you visited me. I drove you to the gaming-table to supply your losses—then I was sure of you. But I dreaded the influence of your wife—I dreaded the influence of Lady M. whose knowledge of life was dangerous to my plans, as dangerous as her true affection for you. Unhappy woman! equally my enemy from love and hatred—she was ill-fated to contend with me—I have destroyed her. Her miserable lord I had an arrangement with many years ago. I renewed it that I might command her fate and your's. You never suspected that I was Lord M.'s amie—his friend; no, I was his bitterest enemy;

I used him as he deserved—as a tool, and now I have thrown him away for ever. Is all the mystery of my conduct now explained? I became your creditor that you might be mine. All I was worth upon earth I would have given for you. I compelled Lord M. to give up his wife, and menace you with a prosecution to terrify you into my arms. I promised to go to the continent with him. Wretched man! he has been wretchedly rewarded for his officious fidelity in vice—in vice of another's. I never would have gone with him. He set out, persuaded I would follow. On the first stage he overtook his fugitive daughter and her paramour Mason. The spirits or habits of a man were not wholly extinguished in him, infamous as he was. He challenged Mason—he fell. Mason escaped. Lady Castle-Wycomb is in a private mad-house. Oh! it is a day of many deaths; he is dead, and I am dying. When I found nothing could shake your

resolution, nothing could stimulate your passions, nothing could bend your principles, I fled from you in the despair of fruitless repentance. I had scattered destruction round me : I had ruined all that opposed me, and still I was a weak and blasted agent. I had driven Lady M. to distraction : that proud and powerful mind I had crushed and humbled—I had killed, actually killed her wretched husband, by torturing her sensibility. I had banished your innocent wife. Oh ! her pale, wasted form will be the first that will greet me in woe. I had done all this, and done all in vain. I could neither allure, nor compel you to—for you I had done all, and in solitude and in a prison you grasped misery to your heart, and pushed me from you. I had no other choice ; I had but one child—a daughter—the daughter of a man whom I knew abroad. I sent her to her father's relations in Ireland. I charged them never to let her know me. If she

never knew a mother's affection, I resolved she should never know a mother's vices. I wished not to destroy more than myself. I resolved to fly to Ireland, and bury myself with her in a nunnery: my life had left me no other choice. This, this last refuge was denied me—she is no more—Elmaide St. Clair is dead—she died for love. Read these letters—ah, no, read nothing now but my dim and dying eyes, and say can you forgive me?”

* * * * *

* * “Soothed by your forgiveness, sustained by your arms—But, oh! where am I going? Oh! hold me up to look at you once more.”

* * * * *

I fell upon the body, while speech remained to me. I prayed that I might be soon cold like it. But while I yet hung over it, it grew livid, bloated: the marks of poison appeared, my senses wandered again * * * * *

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In this state I must have continued several months. I have not the slightest recollection of any event, or almost any sensation during that period, except a faint and sleepy uneasiness at something like attempts made to disturb me from time to time, but by whom, or for what purpose, I had not reason enough to discover or to inquire. When my faculties returned, it was contrary to all expectation, and, I believe, all analogy: they returned completely without weakness, and even without confusion of ideas. The first distinct impression made on my senses was that of a voice reading prayers—a soft and solemn voice—a well-known voice—the voice of Mr. Corbett. It acted on my mind like an omen for good. I sat up softly (I was in bed) like one who fears to break a spell in enchantment. My motions were so quiet, they did not reach the ears of the person; I had leisure to look around me.

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It was evening, but a mild light breaking through the half-drawn curtains, showed me a spacious and elegant apartment, and Mr. Corbett, whose figure I now saw distinctly, kneeling near the bed, with his back turned to me. I called to him. My voice was feeble and broken, and wild: it sounded strangely to my own ears, yet in a moment he discovered it to be the voice of sanity and reason. His own was inarticulate with joy. I poured out a thousand questions and exclamations. He would have delayed answering them; he would have enjoyed composure: but he perceived that in the present state of my feelings, it would be more dangerous to contend with than to gratify them. He was proceeding with a slow and jealous caution, when a door half opened disclosed a well-known figure—it retreated—I called to it—"Sybilla, Sybilla, my sister, can you think your sight would injure you?" She approached me with fears of joy and

timidity. "Though I have no longer a title to the name of sister, no sister ever, ever felt more joy at a brother restored." "Not my sister—is this a dream? if it be, it is peopled with such delightful shapes, I would it could last for ever." "It is no dream," said Mr. Corbett, "she is no longer your sister; but if you have lost a sister, you have found a father."

I cannot detail the gradual and trembling process of this discovery. In a few hours I was clasped to the bosom of a real father. He was the stranger of the solitary tower in the west of Ireland; he was the Irish peasant of the masquerade; he was the lover of Lady Montrevor, who now, with her hand clasped in his, leaned on my shoulder while he hung over me, and Sybilla and Hammond saw us dimly through the tears which yet they did not seek to wipe away, and the heavenly-minded Corbett called upon us in a tone of tempered monition, to repress the tu-

mult of human feeling, and consecrate our happiness by gratitude and praise.

Many days elapsed before I could hear or comprehend the tale of wonders they told me. My father, attached in early life to Lady Montrevor, and repelled from her by the error of her pride, or his own, suffered his despair to deprave his mind and habits; he gave up professional distinctions: he gave up all that could make life happy or honorable. He wandered over the continent a reckless, unhappy libertine, stimulating his senses by temporary connexions, and trying to forget the aspirations of a lofty mind in the blandishments. In this state he formed a connexion with my unhappy mother, who had been brought to Avignon by an English gentleman with whom she lived—and, deserted there, sought a refuge from dejection or poverty in an arrangement with my father. This continued for some months, till learning that his younger

brother, (Mr. Bethel,) with whom he had no connexion, had arrived in Avignon, he abruptly left that place, leaving Miss Percival, with whose situation he was unacquainted, pregnant with me.

She was too attractive, and too anxious to attract, to remain long neglected: she threw herself in Mr. Bethel's way, became his mistress; and believing it would confirm her influence or her establishment, informed him shortly after their connection, that she was likely to make him a father. I was the offspring of the elder brother, though supposed (by all but my mother) to be the son of Mr. Bethel; and so striking was my resemblance to my real parent, that Lady Montrevor, who remembered him too well, at one of my first interviews with her, drew me into the recess, that she might gaze on me without disturbance, and feed her melancholy mind with the recalled imagery of early hope. This resemblance, the cause of her first

and distinguished partiality for me, was the cause in me of a too flattering error of which the consequences have long since ceased.

During his feverish and unhappy career of libertinism, my father was seized at Rome with a violent fever. He was a Catholic; the agonies of conscience smote him on what he believed to be his dying bed; the priests, by whom he was surrounded, knew how to employ this as an instrument to subdue and debilitate their catechumen. The "faitez penitence," of the Romish ritual was substituted for the intellectual and moral amelioration that should have restored him to mental sanity and rational happiness. He became a lay brother in a convent in Rome, and here Lady Montrevor, flying from the dreadful consequences of her dissipated madness, met him, as she then believed to meet no more. Another fever followed the shock of this interview, and the intel-

ligence of his death (which was expected every moment) followed her to England. On his recovery he found the place where he had last beheld her insupportable to his sight and feelings, and learning that a countryman of his was about to go to Ireland, attached himself to him as a religious companion, and resided for years with him in the West of Ireland, without making himself known to his brother, the Chieftain De Lacy, or, (when he rarely ventured abroad) being himself known amid the ravages of a ruined constitution, and a broken mind.

When the person with whom he lived at length died, he succeeded to the small property he had died possessed of, disposed of the house and grounds, and confining himself to a ruinous building that stood on part of it, occupied his time and his revenue in acts of the most laborious beneficence. He lived in total solitude, and this solitude was deepened into total se-

clusion, when Lady Montrevor with her lord and family arrived in Ireland, and in his neighbourhood. This was the cause of his abstraction, his silence, his dark and hurried appearance. He wished not to be known to either of his brothers, to the Chieftain he knew he could give no happiness, and to Mr. Bethel, he believed he could teach no repentance: and Lady Montrevor he believed equally beyond the reach of both. Yet when his brother's life was threatened, he hastened to save him, and to impel me to save him, but disappeared as soon as his purpose was effected, to escape discovery.

As he was about to enjoy some tranquillity on our removal from Ireland, he was one night disturbed in his solitary residence by my unhappy mother who came to implore his forgiveness, and to die. She informed him that he had a son, that that son was the supposed child of

his younger brother Bethel, and that the falsity which she had at first fabricated for her own advantage, she had afterwards kept from fear, from the difficulty of discovering his real parent, and from the experimental spirit of the new philosophy which taught that parental affection being merely a mechanical and desultory impulse might be as easily transferred as an attachment to any other fluctuating and incidental possession. She had been afterwards occupied too much by her own concerns to think of her children. Masseur, whom she had robbed us to follow, with the usual levity and wickedness of a Frenchman, had plundered, abused, and deserted her.

On the verge of death, to which her connexion with him had reduced her, she had collected her declining strength to crawl to my father's melancholy retreat, and tell him that I was his son; and that I was, as she had learned during her short residence in London, on the brink of

ruin, which nothing but his interference could prevent.

The affections of nature poured into my father's heart again. He confessed afterwards to me that he had beheld me during this inter-regnum of human feeling with interest such as he never thought he could again feel for an human being. He now discovered that I was his son. He was impelled for my sake, and for his own, to make some inquiries into the state of the property, whose rapid dilapidation my mother had apprised him just before her death. The inquiry terminated in a discovery of Deloraine's (my agent) real character and views; of that inveterate and unpacified enmity which had so often nearly terminated my existence; and which at length, had ended in the terrible dissolution of his own. He discovered Deloraine's having endeavoured to suggest to me a line of conduct the most offensive to my uncle, his having impelled me to decline

the duel, of which the effects he knew (and hoped) would be my utter alienation from his property and his affections, of his afterwards having employed a ruffian to strangle my uncle, in consequence of some indications of his returning affections, a danger from which my unexpected interference rescued him; of his endeavouring to seduce the affections of Athanasia through the medium of the wretched gouvernante, who had been formerly his mistress; his successful attempts to poison my mind and constitution by the seduction of dissipated habits; his last effort to alienate my uncle from me, by procuring his arrests for debts which he had impelled me to contract; and of his finally deranging the affairs I had committed to his inspection, in consequence of which I was on the verge of ruin. My father felt there was no time to be lost in the recognition of his son and of his claims. He imme-

diately called on Mr. Corbett, whose character and abilities he venerated, to observe the movements of the enemy in Ireland, while he himself hastened to London to snatch me from destruction.

In London he lived for some time concealed, hesitating in the natural suspense of feeling on the mode of discovering himself. At this period he was recognized by Lady Montrevor, in Berkeley-square, on the night when, mingling with the crowd, who were admitted to gaze at the decorations of the night, he had lingered to gaze on her; she knew him. Her recollection gave a throb of wild and dangerous joy to his heart. He forgot the purpose he had come for to enjoy it again. On the dreadful night of the masquerade he made himself known to her. Oh! that terrible period, when Lady Montrevort, goaded to agony by her infamous husband, was only preserved from suicide

by the reflection that there was one arm extended to protect her—that there was one heart which beat for her still. She threw herself in despair into the arms of her first love, and implored him to hide her in the solitude of his retreat from the world and from herself for ever. To a mind like her's, powerful and perverted, nothing appears so striking as a plan of monastic seclusion, and gloomy penitence. Such was the plan that she had formed in the distraction of her thoughts, wild and great, like all the rest.

My father, yielding to his religion or his passion, resolved to place her in Ireland in some retreat, and then return to vindicate me and her. But in the mean time, Hammond, on the first intelligence of my situation, had hastened from Ireland, and appearing in his professional character in Court, had exposed the bribed witnesses and mis-stated facts of

the prosecutor to such contempt and abhorrence, that Lord Montrevor's retreat with Lady Delphina was anticipated by the necessity of flying from the infamy that had almost endangered his life as he returned from hearing a complete verdict given for the defendant.

His dreadful fate has been already related. My father and Lady Montrevor were met on their journey by Mr. Corbett, who was hastening from Ireland, with the terrible account of Deloraine's death, who, dreading the discovery with which his disappointed influence over Athanasia threatened him, had shot himself; and in the short interval of approaching dissolution, (for his death was not immediate,) confessed his persecution of me to Mr. Corbett; and disclosed to him the retreat of Athanasia, which the post-mark of her final letter to him had informed him of. He adjured Mr. Corbett to hasten and

repair the evils he had done us; and while he was yet struggling to relate them all, died in the agonies of immature death, and involuntary penitence.

Mr. Corbett, feeble with age, and shaken by the horrors he had witnessed, hastened nevertheless to fulfil the great duty imposed on him. In his progress to London he met my father and Lady Montrevor, with whose purpose he was soon acquainted, and with whom he reasoned so powerfully on the inutility of that repentance which consisted in gloomy and secluded virtue, and the danger of confounding the dictates of religion with the impulses of human passion, and sacrificing with unhallowed fire on the altar of reformation, that they returned with a resolution of final separation; he determining on the termination of the trial, to return to Ireland, and she, though she abjured all future connexion with her infamous

husband, resolving to see the beloved of her youth no more.

From this state of unhappy heroism, they were extricated by the death of Lord Montrevor. The exiles from happiness and from themselves, returned to each other's arms, and felt that no period of life was too late for felicity. Their minds were no longer distorted by unhappy passion, their talents no longer abused by opposite perversions, their feelings and their happiness no longer subverted by the necessity of artificial display on one side, and a gloomy interment on the other. My melancholy state was the only obstruction to their happiness, and this last obstruction was removed by the restoration of my reason. It was to more than reason; to health, to tranquillity, to affection, to friends, to fortune, (for my father had rectified the artificial derangement which the unfortunate Deloraine

had introduced into my affairs.) “And when we return to Ireland,” said my father, on concluding his narrative, which had occupied some days, “and when once more in the castle of your ancestors, you are surrounded by me, by Lady M. by Hammond, and Sybilla, and Mr. Corbett, will you have a wish ungratified, a recess in your heart unoccupied?”

I could not speak, the thought of my angel-wife filled me with love and agony; they had never mentioned her name; I had not dared to utter it. I grasped my father's hand; I held it to my heart. He felt how it beat; he felt it was dangerous to trifle with its struggles. He was beginning to speak, when a sound, sweeter than the first whisper of happiness, struck my ear; it was the voice of an infant. I did not wait to speak—to think—to ask a question—I started up—a door half-opened—a figure appeared at it—It was Athanasia, with my child in her arms!

She would have knelt, but I sunk beside her: I tasted the kisses of my wife and my babe! Let those who cannot feel my felicity, attempt to describe it.

THE END.

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